





The "Teaching of English" Series

General Editor—SIR HENRY NEWBOLT

OLD TESTAMENT DRAMA



JOB'S COMFORTERS

*From a pen-drawing by
E. Heber Thompson*

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OLD TESTAMENT DRAMA

or

Dramatic Readings from
Hebrew Literature

Selected and Edited by
M. W. THOMAS, M.A.



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OLD TESTAMENT DRAMA

INTRODUCTION

THERE is a danger that in these days of educational experiment and innovation, certain fundamental characteristics of the child's mind may be overlooked. We are apt, many of us, to forget sometimes that the child of to-day is the child of the ages ; that, unlike us, he is not continually longing after some new thing. He is essentially, and by his very nature, *laudator temporis acti*. For him the best things are the old things—old toys, old games, and old stories. Who has not experienced the demand for the old fairy tale, the eager hanging upon every word and incident, the promptly expressed displeasure at any variation in the detail ? It is thus that his desire for self-expression finds its easiest fulfilment, and by working and reworking on the old material, his longing for self-realization amid the varying and complex conditions of his environment is most fully gratified.

That is the basic idea upon which this little book has been planned. The stories here set forth are the old familiar ones which all children ought to know and love. They make a sure and never-failing appeal to the child (and not by any means to the young child only) simply because they *are* familiar.

The form in which they are cast will, it is believed,

provide that material for self-expression and self-realization which is one of the chief aims of English teaching. Dramatization is a very powerful force, and within limits it can do what perhaps no other educational method can accomplish. If it does no more than show that the Old Testament makes very fine reading, and contains rare adventures told in an enthralling fashion, the purpose of this book will have been served.

There are at least three ways in which these plays may be used. The more thorough-going exponents of dramatization will naturally have their stage and such properties as are necessary (they are very few, and easily improvised) ready to hand. The question of costume must be left to individual discretion—the long, flowing robes of the East will have a place in most property chests.

But it is hoped that the scheme of work here outlined may also prove of value to those who, either from lack of time, or for some other reason, are compelled to be less ambitious. For these, what better stage than the form-room, with the blackboard and table moved out of the way? The master's chair makes a splendid throne, the aisles between the desks are just the lurking-places where one would expect to find the enemy, the easel is easily arranged to be either a tent or a prison, and many a sanguinary battle has been fought with rulers! Such details may safely be left to the imagination of the players—the trouble will usually be to damp the ardour of their invention.

For some, acting even on such a modest scale as this is not possible, and they must confine themselves to reading in class. The old method of "reading round" has, of course, long been condemned; but the dramatic value of the Old Testament will still be apparent if parts are allotted to the children and read from their places.

Many teachers will feel diffident at introducing the Deity as a "character" in their plays. This point has not been neglected, and, except in *Job the Patient* (which is planned after the fashion of a mediæval Morality Play), God nowhere appears as one of the *dramatis personæ*. If the pupil to whom is allotted the part of the Voice of God reads his speeches from behind the stage or from the back of the room, the dramatic effect will be considerably enhanced, and any suggestion of irreverence avoided.

M. W. T.

ABRAHAM

THE PLAYERS

ABRAHAM.

SARAH, *the wife of Abraham.*

ISAAC, *the son of Abraham.*

REBEKAH, *the wife of Isaac.*

LABAN, *the father of Rebekah.*

Angels.

LOT.

Family of Lot.

Servant.

Men of Sodom.

ABRAHAM

SCENE I. *The Covenant*

Abram is alone on the stage. The Voice of God, very gentle and low, comes from behind.

Voice of God. Fear not, Abram : I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.

Abram. O Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and he that shall be the possessor of my house is Dammesek Eliezer ? Behold, to me thou hast given no seed : and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.

Voice of God. This man shall not be thine heir ; but he that shall spring from thine own loins shall be thine heir. I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.

Abram. O Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it ?

Voice of God. Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon.

Reader. And he took him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each half over against the other : but the birds divided he not. And the birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away. And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram ; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.

[Having fulfilled God's commands, Abram lies down to sleep.]

Voice of God. Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them ; and they shall afflict them four hundred years ; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge : and afterward shall they come out with great substance. But thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace ; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. And in the fourth generation they shall come hither again : for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full. Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates : the Kenite and the Kenizzite, and the Kadmonite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Rephaim, and the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Girgashite, and the Jebusite. I am God Almighty ; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

[Abram awakes, and realizing that it is God talking to him, and no dream, falls on his face to the earth.]

Voice of God. As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be the father of a multitude of nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham ; for the father of a multitude of nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land of thy sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession ; and I will be their God. And as for thee, thou shalt keep thy covenant, thou, and thy seed after thee throughout their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee ; every male among you shall be cir-

cumcised. And it shall be a token of a covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every male throughout your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised : and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised male who is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people ; he hath broken my covenant. As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and moreover I will give thee a son of her : yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations ; kings of peoples shall be of her.

[Abraham cannot believe such a promise, and doubts in his heart.]

Abraham. Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old ? And shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear ?

Oh that Ishmael might live before thee !

Voice of God. Nay, but Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son ; and thou shalt call his name Isaac : and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee : behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly ; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.

Reader. And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised them in the self-same day, as God had said unto him.

SCENE II. *The Three Angels*

It is midday. Abraham is sitting at the door of his tent, wrapt in thought. Suddenly he looks up, and sees three men standing before him. He realizes that they are from God, rises, runs to meet them, and bows down before them. Sarah, who is within the tent, does not notice anything.

Abraham. My lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant : let now a little water be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under a tree : and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your heart ; after that ye shall pass on : forasmuch as ye are come to your servant.

First Angel. So do, as thou hast said.

[Abraham hastens into the tent and calls his wife.]

Abraham. Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes.

Reader. And Abraham ran into the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto the servant ; and he hasted to dress it. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them ; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

[After they have partaken of the meal, the three Angels rise, and speak once more to Abraham.]

Second Angel. Where is Sarah thy wife ?

Abraham. Behold, in the tent.

Second Angel. I will certainly return unto thee when the season cometh round ; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son.

Reader. And Sarah heard in the tent door, which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, and well stricken in age. And Sarah laughed within herself.

Sarah. After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also ?

Third Angel. Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old ? Is anything too hard for the Lord ? At the set time I will return unto thee, when the season cometh round, and Sarah shall have a son.

Sarah. I laughed not.

Third Angel. Nay ; but thou didst laugh.

Reader. And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom : and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.

First Angel. Shall we hide from Abraham that which God doeth, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him ? For we have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment ; to the end that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. For the Lord hath said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous ; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me ; and if not, I will know.

Abraham. Will God consume the righteous with the wicked ? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city : will he consume and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein ? That be far from him to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked, that so the righteous should be as the wicked ; that be far from him : shall not the Judge of all the earth do right ?

First Angel. If God find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then will he spare all the place for their sake.

Abraham. Behold now, I have taken upon me to

18 speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes : peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: will he destroy all the city for lack of five ?

First Angel. He will not destroy it, if he find there forty and five.

Abraham. Peradventure there shall be forty found there.

First Angel. He will not do it for the forty's sake.

Abraham. Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak : peradventure there shall be thirty found there.

First Angel. He will not do it, if he find thirty there.

Abraham. Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord : peradventure there shall be twenty found there.

First Angel. God will not destroy it for the twenty's sake.

Abraham. Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once : peradventure ten shall be found there.

First Angel. He will not destroy it for the ten's sake.

Reader. And the men went their way, as soon as they had left communing with Abraham : and Abraham returned unto his place.

SCENE III. *The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah*

Lot is sitting outside the door of his house, at the gate of Sodom. Two angels appear, and walk slowly towards him. He rises to meet them, and bows before them.

Lot. Behold now, my lords, turn aside, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your way.

First Angel. Nay ; but we will abide in the street all night.

Lot. Nay, my lords, I pray you, enter for but a little while, and sup.

Reader. And they turned in unto him, and entered into his house ; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.

[They are sitting together at the door after their meal, when a crowd of rough and hostile men enters. They stand before the house, looking for the two strangers. At the first sign of trouble, Lot hurries his guests indoors.]

Crowd. Where are the men which came in to thee this night ? Bring them out unto us, that we may know them.

[Lot shuts the door, and stands with his back to it.]

Lot. I pray you, my brethren, do not so wickedly. Do no harm to these men, forasmuch as they are come under the shadow of my roof.

Crowd. Stand back. This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge : now will we deal worse with thee than with them.

Reader. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and drew near to break the door. But the men put forth their hand, and brought Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door.

[The angels appear at the door of the house. They lift their hands to heaven. Suddenly the crowd, which has been pushing steadily towards the door, starts to grope and fumble. Loud cries pierce the air. They have been smitten with blindness.]

Second Angel. Hast thou here any besides ? son-in-law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whomsoever thou hast in the city ; bring them out of the place : for we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the Lord ; and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it.

[Lot calls his sons-in-law out into the street.]

Lot. Up, get you out of this place ; for the Lord will destroy the city.

[The angels sign to him to make haste.

First Angel. Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters which are here ; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.

Reader. But he lingered ; and the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters ; the Lord being merciful unto him : and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.

[The angels point the way, and Lot and his family move slowly across the stage.

Second Angel. Escape for thy life ; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the Plain ; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.

Lot. Oh, not so, my lord : behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shown unto me in saving my life ; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest evil overtake me, and I die : behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one : Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one ?) and my soul shall live.

First Angel. See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow the city of which thou hast spoken. Haste thee, escape thither ; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.

[They hurry on.

Reader. Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven ; and he overthrew those cities, and all the Plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

[Lot's wife looks round, and then stands stock still. The others, with groans of dismay, hurry on, not daring to look back upon her.

Reader. And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the Lord : and he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the Plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the land went up as the smoke of a furnace. And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the Plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt. And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him ; for he feared to dwell in Zoar : and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.

SCENE IV. *The Trial of Abraham*

Abraham is lying asleep. The Voice of God comes to him in his dream.

Voice of God. Abraham.

Abraham. Here am I.

Voice of God. Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and get thee into the land of Moriah ; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

Reader. And Abraham rose early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son ; and he clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

[*Abraham rises from his sleep very troubled. He calls his two servants to him, summons Isaac, and they move slowly off, Abraham silent and sad, Isaac prattling gaily. They arrive at the place appointed, and Abraham dismisses the servants.*

X *Abraham.* Abide ye here ~~with the ass,~~ and I and the

lad will go yonder ; and we will worship, and come again to you.

[Abraham and Isaac move a little farther across the stage, Isaac carrying the wood whilst Abraham carries a knife.]

Isaac. My father.

Abraham. Here am I, my son.

Isaac. Behold, the fire and the wood : but where is the lamb for a burnt offering ?

[Abraham is almost overcome with grief. He speaks very softly and tenderly.]

Abraham. God will provide himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.

Reader. And Abraham built the altar there, in the place which God had told him of, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven.

[The voice comes from behind the stage.]

Angel. Abraham, Abraham.

Abraham. Here am I.

Angel. Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him : for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from him.

Reader. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and beheld behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns : and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham a second time out of heaven.

Angel. By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son : that in blessing will I bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore ; and thy seed shall possess the

gate of his enemies ; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed ; because thou hast obeyed my voice. X

Reader. So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beer-sheba ; and Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba.

SCENE V. *The Sending of the Servant*

Abraham, now old and feeble, is lying on his couch. He calls a servant.

Reader. And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age : and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things.

Abraham. Put, I pray thee, thy hand in mine : and I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife for my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell : but thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son Isaac.

Servant. Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land : must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest ?

Abraham. Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again. The Lord, the God of heaven, that took me from my father's house, and from the land of my nativity, and that spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land ; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife for my son from thence. And if the woman be not willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath ; only thou shalt not bring my son thither again.

[*The servant takes Abraham's hand in his own, and kneels before him.*

Servant. All these things will I do.

SCENE VI. *The Finding of Rebekah*

The servant is standing by a well outside the city of Nahor.

Reader. And the servant took ten camels, of the camels of his master, and departed ; having all goodly things of his master's in his hand ; and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor. And he made the camels to kneel down without the city by the well of water at the time of evening, the time that women go out to draw water.

Servant. O Lord, the God of my master Abraham, send me, I pray thee, good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand by the fountain of water ; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water : and let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink ; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also : let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac ; and thereby shall I know that thou hast showed kindness unto my master.

Rebekah enters, bearing a pitcher on her shoulder.

Reader. And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin ; and she went down to the fountain, and filled her pitcher, and came up.

Servant. Give me to drink, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher.

Rebekah. Drink, my lord.

[She draws water and gives him to drink.]

Rebekah. I will draw for thy camels also, until they have done drinking.

[She draws water also for the camels.]

Reader. And the man looked steadfastly on her ; holding his peace, to know whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not. And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden ring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold.

Servant. Whose daughter art thou ? Tell me, I pray thee. Is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in ?

Rebekah. I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor. We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in.

[The servant bows to the earth, and offers thanks to God.]

Servant. Blessed be the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who hath not forsaken his mercy and his truth toward my master : as for me, the Lord hath led me in the way to the house of my master's brethren.

Laban enters. *He looks in astonishment at the ring and bracelets which his sister is wearing.*

Rebekah. Thus spake the man unto me, Is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in ?

Laban. Come in, thou blessed of the Lord ; wherefore standest thou without ? For I have prepared the house, and room for the camels.

Servant. I will not eat, until I have told mine errand.

Laban. Speak on.

Servant. I am Abraham's servant. And the Lord hath blessed my master greatly ; and he is become great : and he hath given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and men-servants and maid-servants,

and camels and asses. And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old : and unto him hath he given all that he hath. And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife for my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell : but thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son. And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me. And he said unto me, The Lord, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way ; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house : then shalt thou be clear from my oath. And I came this day unto the fountain, and said, O Lord, the God of my master Abraham, if now thou do prosper my way which I go : behold, I stand by the fountain of water ; and let it come to pass, that the maiden which cometh forth to draw, to whom I shall say, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink ; and she shall say to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels : let the same be the woman whom the Lord hath appointed for my master's son. And before I had done speaking in mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder ; and she went down unto the fountain, and drew : and I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee. And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her shoulder, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also ; so I drank, and she made the camels drink also. And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter art thou ? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him : and I put the ring upon her nose, and the bracelets upon her hands. And I bowed my head, and worshipped the Lord, and blessed the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter for his son. And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me : and if not,

tell me ; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left.

Laban. The thing proceedeth from the Lord : we cannot speak unto thee bad or good. Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken.

Reader. And it came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard their words, he bowed himself down to the earth unto the Lord. And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah : he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things. And they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him, and tarried all night ; and they rose up in the morning.

Servant. Send me away unto my master.

Laban. Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten ; after that she shall go.

Servant. Hinder me not, seeing the Lord hath prospered my way ; send me away that I may go to my master.

Laban. I will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth. Wilt thou go with this man ?

Rebekah. I will go.

Laban. Our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.

[*Laban goes out. Rebekah and the servant move across the stage.*

Isaac enters.

Reader. And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man : and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way. And Isaac came from the way of Beer-lahai-roi ; for he dwelt in the land of the South. And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide : and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, there were camels coming.

Rebekah. What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us ?

Servant. It is my master.

Reader. And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife ; and he loved her : and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

EPILOGUE

Reader. And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years. Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years ; and was gathered to his people. And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre ; the field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth : there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.

JACOB AND ESAU

THE PLAYERS

ISAAC.

REBEKAH, *the wife of Isaac.*

ESAU, } *the sons of Isaac.*

JACOB, }

LABAN, *the brother of Rebekah.*

LEAH, } *the daughters of Laban.*

RACHEL, }

Children of Jacob.

Shepherds.

Messengers.

JACOB AND ESAU

SCENE I. *The Trickery of Jacob*

Isaac is lying alone in his tent. He is old, so that his eyes are dim, and he cannot see. On the left of the stage, and outside the tent, sits Rebekah, who is busy at her spinning. At her feet sits Jacob, mending the string of his bow.

Isaac. Esau ! Esau ! my son. Come in to me !

Esau enters on the right. He is tall and strong, and you notice immediately that he is rough and hairy, in strange contrast to his brother, whose skin is very smooth. He kneels at the feet of his father.

Esau. Behold, here I am.

Isaac. Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death. Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me venison ; and make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat ; that my soul may bless thee before I die.

[*Esau rises, and goes out. Rebekah has overheard what Isaac has been saying. She pauses, and then suddenly making up her mind, motions to Jacob, who gets up, and follows her over to the extreme left of the stage.*

Rebekah. Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying, Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I may eat, and bless thee before

the Lord before my death. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee. Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats ; and I will make them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth : and thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, so that he may bless thee before his death.

Jacob. Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man. My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver ; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing.

Rebekah. Upon me be thy curse, my son : only obey my voice, and go fetch me them.

Reader. And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother : and his mother made savoury meat, such as his father loved. And Rebekah took the goodly raiment of Esau her elder son, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son : and she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck : and she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.

[Jacob is now prepared to carry out the scheme, and he enters the tent of Isaac. He kneels down before his father.]

Jacob. My father !

Isaac. Here am I ; who art thou, my son ?

Jacob. I am Esau thy firstborn ; I have done according as thou badest me : arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me.

[He offers the dish of venison to his father, who takes it gropingly. Isaac seems rather surprised.]

Isaac. How is it thou hast found it so quickly, my son ?

Jacob. Because the Lord thy God sent me good speed.

Isaac. Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel

thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not.

[*Jacob approaches. He keeps his head very low, and allows his father to feel his neck and arms.*

Isaac. The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. Art thou my very son Esau ?

Jacob. I am.

Isaac. Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee.

[*Isaac eats the venison, and drinks the wine which Jacob brings.*

Isaac. Come near now, and kiss me, my son.

[*Jacob, still keeping his face averted, approaches, and, kneeling down, kisses his father's hand.*

Isaac. See, the smell of my son
Is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed :
And God give thee of the dew of Heaven,
And of the fatness of the earth,
And plenty of corn and wine :
Let people serve thee,
And nations bow down to thee :
Be lord over thy brethren,
And let thy mother's sons bow down to thee :
Cursed be every one that curseth thee,
And blessed be every one that blesseth thee.

[*Jacob goes out.*

Reader. And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. And he also made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father.

[*Esau acts in dumb-show, and having prepared his venison, goes into his father's tent. Isaac is asleep.*

Esau. Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me.

[*Isaac starts up in surprise. He cannot see.*

Isaac. Who art thou ?

Esau. I am thy son, thy firstborn, Esau.

Isaac. Who then is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? Yea, and he shall be blessed.

[*Esau is thunderstruck at the terrible news. He throws himself at his father's feet, and bursts into tears.*]

Esau. Bless me, even me also, O my father.

Isaac. Thy brother came with guile, and hath taken away thy blessing.

Esau. Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?

Isaac. Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what then shall I do for thee, my son?

Esau. Hast thou but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father.

Isaac. Behold, of the fatness of the earth shall be thy dwelling,

And of the dew of heaven from above;

And by thy sword shalt thou live, and thou shalt serve thy brother;

And it shall come to pass when thou shalt break loose,

That thou shalt shake his yoke from off thy neck.

[*Esau rises, and stands at the door of the tent. He does not notice his mother and Jacob, who have been anxiously watching from the left of the stage. Esau mutters to himself.*]

Esau. The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob.

[*Esau goes out.*]

Rebekah. Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, purposing to kill thee.

Now therefore, my son, obey my voice ; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran ; and tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away ; until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done to him : then I will send, and fetch thee from thence : why should I be bereaved of you both in one day ?

[Rebekah goes in to Isaac.]

Rebekah. I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth : if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these, of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me ?

[Isaac ponders a few minutes and then calls Jacob to him.]

Isaac. Jacob, my son, come in unto me. Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father ; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother. And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a company of people ; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee ; that thou mayest inherit the land of thy sojournings, which God gave unto Abraham.

[Isaac and Rebekah go out.]

SCENE II. *Jacob and Laban*

Reader. Jacob went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set ; and he took one of the stones of that place, and put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep.

[Jacob lies down, and falls asleep. He wakes with a start, stands, and looks round fearfully.]

Jacob. Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it

not, for I have dreamed a dream, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven : and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac : the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed ; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south : and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land ; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

How dreadful is this place ! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

Reader. Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Beth-el. And Jacob vowed a vow.

Jacob. If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God : and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house : and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

Reader. Then Jacob went on his journey, and came to the land of the children of the east. And he looked, and behold a well in the field, and, lo, three flocks of sheep lying there by it ; for out of that well they watered the flocks : and the stone upon the well's mouth was great. And thither were all the flocks gathered : and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in its place.

The shepherds who are gathered round the well, talking and laughing, look up in surprise when Jacob comes in. They water their sheep, and then gather round the stranger, eager to know who he may be.

Jacob. My brethren, whence be ye ?

Shepherds. Of Haran are we.

Jacob. Know ye Laban the son of Nahor ?

Shepherds. We know him.

Jacob. Is it well with him ?

Shepherds. It is well : and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep.

Jacob. Lo, it is yet high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together : water ye the sheep, and go and feed them.

Shepherds. We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and they roll the stone from the well's mouth ; then we water the sheep.

[Jacob now sees Rachel driving her sheep before her to the well. He runs up to her, embraces her, rolls away the stone from the well, and helps her to water the sheep.]

Jacob. Rachel ! Is it indeed thou ? Behold, I am Jacob, the son of thy father's brother Isaac, and of Rebekah.

While he is talking to Rachel of his adventures, several of the shepherds run to Laban, and tell him the news.

Laban enters, and running up to Jacob, embraces him.

Laban. Surely thou art my bone and my flesh.

Reader. Jacob abode with Laban the space of a month. Now Laban had two daughters : the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. Leah was tender-eyed ; but Rachel was beautiful and well-favoured.

Laban. Because thou art my brother, shouldst thou therefore serve me for nought ? Tell me, what shall thy wages be ?

Jacob. I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter.

Laban. It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man : abide with me.

Reader. And Jacob served seven years for Rachel ; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her.

Jacob. Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may marry her.

[The wedding ceremony is performed, and not until afterwards does Jacob discover that he has been married to Leah, and not to Rachel. He is very angry with Laban.]

Jacob. What is this thou hast done unto me ? Did not I serve with thee for Rachel ? Wherefore then hast thou beguiled me ?

Laban. It is not so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. Fulfil the week of this one, and we will give thee the other also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.

[Jacob lived many years with Laban, and his wives bore him children. He now desires to return to his own country.]

Jacob. Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country. Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served thee, and let me go : for thou knowest my service wherewith I have served thee.

Laban. If now I have found favour in thy eyes, tarry ; for I have divined that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake. Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it.

Jacob. Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle hath fared with me. For it was little which thou hadst before I came, and it hath increased unto a multitude ; and the Lord hath blessed thee

whithersoever I turned : and now when shall I provide for mine own house also ?

Laban. What shall I give thee ?

Jacob. Thou shalt not give me aught : if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed thy flock and keep it. I will pass through all thy flock to-day, removing from thence every speckled and spotted one, and every black one among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats : and of such shall be my hire. So shall my righteousness answer for me hereafter, when thou shalt come concerning my hire that is before thee : every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and black among the sheep, that is found with me shall be counted stolen.

Laban. Behold, I would it might be according to thy word.

Reader. And he removed that day the goats that were ring-straked and spotted, and every one that had white in it, and all the black ones among the sheep, and gave them into the hand of his sons ; and the cattle had little ones ring-straked, speckled, and spotted. And Jacob separated the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the ring-straked and all the black in the flock of Laban ; and he put his own droves apart, and put them not unto Laban's flock. And it came to pass, that the stronger cattle were Jacob's, and the feebler Laban's. And the man increased exceedingly, and had large flocks, and maid-servants and men-servants, and camels and asses.

[*Jacob calls unto himself his wives, Leah and Rachel.*

Jacob. I see your father's countenance, that it is not toward me as beforetime ; and his sons are saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's ; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory. But the God of my father hath been with me. And ye know that with all my power I have served your father. And your father hath deceived me, and hath changed my wages ten times ; but God

suffered him not to hurt me. If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages ; then all the flock bare speckled ; and if he said thus, The ring-straked shall be thy wages ; then bare all the flock ring-straked. Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me. And the Angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob : and I said, Here am I. And he said, I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me : now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy nativity.

Rachel, Leah. Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house ? Are we not counted of him strangers ? for he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money. For all the riches which God hath taken from our father, that is ours and our children's : now then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do.

Reader. Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon the camels ; and he carried away all his cattle, and all his substance which he had gathered in Padan-aram, for to go to Isaac his father unto the land of Canaan. And Rachel stole the images which were her father's. And it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob was fled. And he took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey ; and he overtook him in the mountain of Gilead.

[*Jacob has pitched his tents when Laban comes up to him.*

Laban. What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters, as captives of the sword ? Wherefore didst thou flee secretly, and steal away from me ; and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth and with songs, and with tabret and with harp ; and hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters ? now hast thou done foolishly. It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt : but the God of your father

spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take heed to thyself that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad. And now, though thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, yet wherefore hast thou stolen my gods ?

Jacob. Because I was afraid : for I said, Peradventure thou wouldest take thy daughters from me by force. With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, he shall not live : before our brethren discern thou what is thine with me, and take it to thee.

[Laban enters the tents of the various members of Jacob's party, but cannot find his stolen images anywhere.]

Rachel, as soon as she finds that a search is being made, hides the images among the harness of the camel. She sits upon the harness. Laban enters. Rachel pretends to be unwell.

Rachel. Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise up before thee ; for I am not well.

[Laban searches the tent, and of course finds nothing.]

Jacob, who has been watching from the door of the tent, begins to suspect that Laban is playing a trick upon him. He gets very angry.

Jacob. What is my trespass ? what is my sin, that thou hast hotly pursued after me ? Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff ? Set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us two. This twenty years have I been with thee ; thy ewes and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee ; I bare the loss of it ; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night. Thus I was ; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night ; and my sleep fled from mine eyes. These twenty years have I been in thine house ; I served thee fourteen for thy two daughters, and six for thy flock : and thou hast changed my wages ten

times. Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely now hadst thou sent me away empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight.

Laban. The daughters are my daughters, and the children my children, and the flocks are my flocks, and all that thou seest is mine : and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have borne ? And now come, let us make a covenant, I and thou ; and let it be for a witness between me and thee.

[He approaches Jacob and embraces him. Jacob sets up a stone as a pillar, and bids his brethren do likewise. They make a great heap of stones, and sit down and eat.]

Laban. This heap is witness between me and thee this day. Therefore shall the name of it be called Galeed : and Mizpah, The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another. If thou shalt afflict my daughters, and if thou shalt take wives beside my daughters, no man is with us ; see, God is witness betwixt me and thee. Behold this heap, and behold the pillar, which I have set betwixt me and thee. This heap be witness, and the pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm. The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us.

Jacob. I swear by the Fear of my father Isaac.

[They offer sacrifice, and Laban embraces his sons and daughters and returns home.]

[Jacob proceeds on his journey. He calls two of his company to him.]

Jacob. Go unto Esau my brother, unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom. Thus shall ye say unto my lord Esau ; Thus saith thy servant Jacob, I have

sojourned with Laban, and stayed until now : and I have oxen, and asses, and flocks, and men-servants and women-servants : and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.

[After an interval the messengers return.]

Messengers. We came to thy brother Esau, and he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.

[Jacob is very frightened at this. He gives instructions for the flocks and herds to be divided into two.]

Jacob. If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.

[He falls on his knees.]

Jacob. O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, O Lord, which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will do thee good : I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant ; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan ; and now I am become two companies. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau : for I fear him, lest he come and smite me, the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

[Jacob rises from his knees and calls to him five of his herdsmen.]

Jacob. Behold, here are two hundred she-goats, and twenty he-goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty milch camels and their colts, forty kine and ten bulls, twenty she-asses, and ten foals. Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove. When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose art thou ? and whither goest thou ? and whose are these before thee ? then shalt thou say, They be thy servant Jacob's ; it is a present sent unto my lord Esau : and, behold, he also is behind us. I will appease him with the present that goeth

before me, and afterward I will see his face ; peradventure he will accept me.

[The messengers go out, and are heard driving their flocks off.]

Reader. Jacob rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two handmaids, and his eleven children, and passed over the ford of Jabbok. He took them, and sent them over the stream, and sent over that he had. And Jacob was left alone.

[Jacob lies down on the other side of the brook, and falls asleep. His slumbers are very disturbed. He tosses about continually. He wakes up with a start. He is alone on the stage. He looks around, and speaks aloud to himself.]

Jacob. Can it be true, or was it only a dream ? Surely there wrestled a man with me even until now, until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against me, he touched the hollow of my thigh ; and the hollow of my thigh was strained, as I wrestled with him. And he said unto me, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And I said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. He asked me, What is thy name ? And I told him, Jacob. And he replied unto me, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel : for thou hast striven with God, and hast prevailed.

The name of this place shall be Penuel, for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.

Jacob crosses the brook and rejoins his family. Rachel and Leah, his sons and the rest of his family, enter upon the left. He greets them, and then scans the horizon anxiously.

Jacob. Behold, I see Esau coming, and with him four hundred men.

[He arranges them in the following order :—The women-servants and their children in the middle of the stage, behind them and to the right, Leah and her children,

and, last of all, Rachel and her son Joseph. He himself goes over to the left centre of the stage. Esau enters from the left. He stands still, looking at the gathering. Jacob bows to the earth seven times, until he comes up to Esau. Esau raises him and embraces him.

Esau. Who are these with thee ?

Jacob. The children which God hath graciously given thy servant.

[The children approach in the order in which they are grouped, and bow to Esau, taking up their positions as before.]

Esau. What meanest thou by all this company which I met ?

Jacob. These are to find grace in the sight of my lord.

Esau. I have enough, my brother ; keep that thou hast unto thyself.

Jacob. Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand : for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me. Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee ; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough.

Esau. So be it. I will take it. Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee.

Jacob. My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and that the flocks and herds with the young are with me : if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die. Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant : and I will lead on softly, according to the pace of the cattle that is before me, and according to the pace of the children, until I come unto my lord, unto Seir.

Esau. Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me.

Jacob. What needeth it ? Let me find grace in the sight of my lord.

[All go out.]

Reader. So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir. And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle. And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan-aram ; and pitched his tent before the city. And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent. And he erected there an altar.

THE ADVENTURES OF JOSEPH

THE PLAYERS

JACOB.
JOSEPH,
REUBEN,
SIMEON,
LEVI,
JUDAH,
ZEBULUN,
ISSACHAR,
DAN,
GAD,
ASHER,
NAPHTALI,
BENJAMIN, } *the sons of Jacob.*
PHARAOH, *King of Egypt.*
Pharaoh's Butler.
Pharaoh's Baker.
Magicians.
Counsellors of Pharaoh.
Messenger.
Steward.
Guards.
Ishmaelite Merchants.
The two sons of Joseph.

THE ADVENTURES OF JOSEPH

SCENE I. *The Treachery of Joseph's Brothers*

The sons of Jacob are watching their sheep. Jacob is at the back of the stage, whilst Joseph sits a little apart from his brethren who are on the right. The brothers are muttering among themselves, and keep casting angry glances at Joseph. It is quite plain that they do not like him.

First Brother. Why doth our father Jacob love his younger son Joseph more than all the rest of us ?

Second Brother. Hath he not made for him a coat of many colours, and preferred him to us, because he is the child of his old age ?

[*They go on muttering to themselves in this fashion.*

Joseph, a tall, well-made youth of about seventeen, has a distant look in his eyes, and you can tell straight away that he is not merely a rough shepherd like the others, but something of a visionary. He rises, and comes across to where his brethren are sitting. They look up, scowling.

Joseph. My brethren, I dreamed a dream last night.

First Brother. Well, and what is that to us ?

Joseph. Nay, hear, I pray you, the dream which I dreamed. For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright ; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.

Second Brother. Shalt thou indeed reign over us ? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us ?

Joseph. Be not angry, my brethren, for, behold, I have dreamed a dream more ; and, behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars made obeisance to me.

First Brother. Dost thou hear, O father, what this thy son hath dreamed ?

[*Jacob comes forward. He is now old and feeble. He rests his hand affectionately on Joseph's shoulder.*

Jacob. What is it that my son hath dreamed ?

Joseph. I dreamed that the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.

[*The brothers again murmur angrily to themselves.*

Jacob sees their anger, and tries to appease it.

Jacob. What is this dream that thou hast dreamed ? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth ?

[*The brothers go out, driving their flocks before them.*

There is an interval of a few days.

Jacob. Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem ? Come, and I will send thee unto them.

Joseph. Here am I.

Jacob. Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks ; and bring me word again.

Joseph goes out on the left. His brothers enter on the right, and move over to the left of the stage. They sit down wearily, and commence to talk. They are evidently discussing their young brother.

First Brother. Why doth our father not send Joseph with us to mind the flocks ?

Second Brother. Nay, I know not. Perchance he keepeth him at home to dream.

[*A pause. Suddenly one of them starts up, and looks into the distance.*

Third Brother. Behold this dreamer cometh !

Second Brother. Come now therefore, and let us slay him.

First Brother. Let us cast him into some pit, and we will say that some evil beast hath devoured him : and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

Reuben. Nay, let us not kill him. Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness. Lay no hand upon him.

[*To himself*] Thus will I deliver him unto his father again, and rid him out of their hands.

Joseph enters on the right, and goes up to greet his brothers. Before he can say anything they seize him, strip off his coat of many colours, and cast him into a pit at the back of the stage.

Reader. And they sat down to eat bread : and they lifted up their eyes, and behold, a travelling company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt.

The merchants enter.

First Brother. What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood ? Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him ; for he is our brother and our flesh.

Brothers. So let it be.

Reader. And they drew and lifted Joseph up out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. And they brought Joseph into Egypt.

And the brothers took Joseph's coat, and killed a he-goat, and dipped the coat in the blood ; and they sent the coat of many colours, and brought it to their father.

Whilst this is being read the brothers go off at the left, and Jacob enters at the right, and goes to the centre of the stage. The brothers enter from the right, and bearing the coat, go up to their father.

First Brother. This have we found : know now whether it be thy son's coat or not.

[*Jacob takes the coat. He can hardly speak. After looking at it for a moment, he clutches it to his breast, and bursts into tears.*

Jacob. It is my son's coat ; an evil beast hath devoured him ; Joseph is without doubt torn in pieces.

Reader. And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him ; but he refused to be comforted. Thus his father wept for him. And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, the captain of the guard.

SCENE II. *Egypt. The Prison of Pharaoh's Palace*

Reader. And Joseph was brought down to Egypt ; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmaelites, which had brought him down thither. And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man ; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him ; and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand ; and he left all that he had in Joseph's hand, and he knew not aught he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured. And it came to pass that his master's wife looked upon Joseph and tempted him ; but Joseph said, How can I do so great a wickedness, and sin against God ? And Potiphar's wife told her husband that the Hebrew servant had mocked her. And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison,

the place where the king's prisoners were bound. But the Lord was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison ; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. And it came to pass after these things, that the butler of the king of Egypt and his baker offended their lord the king of Egypt. And Pharaoh was wroth against his two officers, against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers. And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound. And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them : and they continued a season in ward.

[The butler and the baker are lying asleep at the back of the stage. Joseph is sitting with his head in his hands on the left. The butler awakes, yawns, leans over, and awakens the baker. They mutter to each other, and look uneasily across at Joseph. Joseph looks up.]

Joseph. Wherefore look ye so sadly to-day ?

Butler. We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it.

Joseph. Do not interpretations belong to God ? Tell me them, I pray you.

Butler. In my dream, behold, a vine was before me ; and in the vine were three branches : and it was as though it budded, and its blossoms shot forth ; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes : and Pharaoh's cup was in my hand ; and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand.

Joseph. This is the interpretation of it : the three branches are three days : yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift thine head, and restore thee unto thy place : and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his

hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler. But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house : for indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews ; and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.

Baker. I also was in my dream, and, behold, I had three baskets of white bread on my head ; and in the uppermost basket there was all manner of bakemeats for Pharaoh ; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head.

Joseph. This is the interpretation thereof : the three baskets are three days : yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree ; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee.

Reader. And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants : and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants. And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again ; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand : but he hanged the chief baker : as Joseph had interpreted to them. Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him.

SCENE III. *Two Years Later*

Pharaoh is sitting on his throne, in the middle of the stage. He is surrounded by his counsellors. Two women are fanning him. He makes an impatient movement, gets up, strides about, and resumes his seat, looking very worried.

Pharaoh. Call me my magicians.

The magicians enter, and bow before him.

Pharaoh. I dreamed a dream last night. I stood by a river, and, behold, there came up out of the river seven well-favoured kine and fat fleshed ; and they fed in a meadow. And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill-favoured and lean fleshed ; and stood by the other kine upon the brink of the river. And the ill-favoured and lean fleshed kine did eat up the seven well-favoured and fat kine. And I awoke. And I fell asleep, and dreamed a second time : and, behold, seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, fat and good. And, behold, seven thin ears and blasted with the east wind sprung up after them. And the seven thin ears devoured the seven fat and full ears. And I awoke, and, behold, it was a dream. Is there any now who can interpret this my dream ?

The magicians stand perplexed and silent, looking uneasily at one another. The butler enters, bows to Pharaoh, fills his cup, and takes his place among the counsellors. They explain to him in a whisper what has been going on. He starts, and seems to be trying to recall something. Then suddenly, brushing the others aside, he dashes up to Pharaoh, and flings himself on his knees before the throne.

Butler. O Pharaoh, I do remember my faults this day. Thou wert wroth with thy servants, and put me in ward, in the captain of the guard's house, both me and the chief baker. And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he ; we dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream. And there was with us there a young man, an Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard. We told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams ; to each man according to his dream did he interpret. And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was ; me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged.

Pharaoh. Send, and fetch me this Joseph from out of the dungeon of the captain of the guard.

A messenger hurries out, and soon returns with Joseph. Joseph seems overcome with amazement at this sudden happening. He falls on his knees before Pharaoh, and awaits his commands.

Pharaoh. I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it. I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it.

Joseph. It is not in me : God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.

Pharaoh. In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of a river : and, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, fat fleshed and well-favoured ; and they fed in a meadow : and, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill-favoured and lean fleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness : and the lean and ill-favoured kine did eat up the first seven fat kine : and when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them ; but they were still ill-favoured, as at the beginning. So I awoke. And I saw in my dream, and, behold, seven ears came up upon one stalk, full and good : and, behold, seven ears, withered, thin, and blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them : and the thin ears devoured the seven good ears : and I told this unto the magicians ; but there was none that could declare it to me.

Joseph. The dream of Pharaoh is one : God hath showed Pharaoh what he is about to do. The seven good kine are seven years ; and the seven good ears are seven years : the dream is one. And the seven thin and ill-favoured kine that came up after them are seven years ; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind shall be seven years of famine. This is the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh : what God is about to do he sheweth unto Pharaoh. Behold,

there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt : and there shall arise after them seven years of famine ; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt ; and the famine shall consume the land ; and the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following ; for it shall be very grievous. And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice : it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass. Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years. And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt ; that the land perish not through the famine.

Pharaoh. Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom the Spirit of God is ? Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art : thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled : only in the throne will I be greater than thou. See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.

Reader. And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt. And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls. And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities : the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same. And Joseph

gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering ; for it was without number. And the seven years of plenteousness, that was in the land of Egypt, were ended. And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said : and the dearth was in all lands ; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread : and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph ; what he saith to you, do. And the famine was over all the face of the earth : and Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians ; and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt. And all the countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn ; because that the famine was so sore in all lands.

SCENE IV. *The Famine*

Reader. And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt. But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren ; for he said, Lest peradventure mischief befall him. And the sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came : for the famine was in the land of Canaan. And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land : and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth. And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them.

The brothers enter, and bow before Joseph. They do not know him, though he recognizes them.

Joseph. Whence come ye ? Ye are spies ; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.

Brothers. Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy

servants come. We are all one man's sons ; we are true men, thy servants are no spies.

Joseph. Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.

Brothers. Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan ; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not.

Joseph. That is it that I spake unto you, saying, Ye are spies. Hereby ye shall be proved : by the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither. Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be kept in prison, that your words may be proved, whether there be any truth in you : or else by the life of Pharaoh surely ye are spies. This do, and live ; for I fear God : if ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in your prison-house ; go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses : but bring your youngest brother unto me ; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die.

[The brothers confer anxiously together. They do not realize that Joseph can understand them.]

Brothers. We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear ; therefore is this distress come upon us.

Reuben. Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child ; and ye would not hear ? Therefore, behold, his blood is required.

[Joseph turns aside and weeps. He returns to them and binds Simeon. Two guards take Simeon out on left, and the others follow.]

Joseph. Fill their sacks with corn, and restore every man's money into his sack, and give them provision for the way.

SCENE V. *Jacob's House*

Jacob is sitting on left of stage. The brothers enter on right.

First Brother. The man, who is the lord of the land, spake roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country. And we said unto him, We are true men ; we are no spies ; we be twelve brethren, sons of our father ; one is not, and the youngest is this day with our father in the land of Canaan. And the man, the lord of the country, said unto us, Hereby shall I know that ye are true men ; leave one of your brethren here with me, and take food for the famine of your households, and be gone : and bring your youngest brother unto me : then shall I know that ye are no spies, but that ye are true men : so will I deliver you your brother, and ye shall traffick in the land.

[They open their sacks. The bundle of money falls from each sack.]

Jacob. Me have ye bereaved of my children : Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away : all these things are against me.

Reuben. Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee : deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again.

Jacob. My son shall not go down with you ; for his brother is dead, and he only is left : if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

[There is an interval.]

Reader. And the famine was sore in the land. And it came to pass, that they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt.

Jacob. Go again, buy us a little food.

Judah. The man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be

with you. If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food : but if thou wilt not send him, we will not go down : for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.

Jacob. Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother ?

First Brother. The man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive ? have ye another brother ? And we told him according to the tenor of these words : could we in any wise know that he would say, Bring your brother down ?

Judah. Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go ; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones. I will be surety for him ; of my hand shalt thou require him : if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever : for except we had lingered, surely now we had returned this second time.

Jacob. If it must be so, do this : take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds : and take double money in your hand ; and the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks, carry again in your hand ; peradventure it was an oversight : take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man : and God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may release unto you your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.

SCENE VI. *Joseph's House*

Reader. And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin ;

and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph.

[Joseph is standing looking through the window, awaiting the return of the brothers. He sees them in the distance, and turns to his servant.]

Joseph. Bring these men into the house, and slay, and make ready; for these men shall dine with me at noon.

The servant goes out, and presently ushers in the ten brothers on the left. They crowd together at the entrance.

Judah [aside]. Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses.

[Joseph takes no notice of them. They turn anxiously to the steward.]

Second Brother. Oh sir, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food: and it came to pass, when we came to the inn, that we opened the sacks, and, behold, every man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight: and we have brought it again in our hand. And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food: we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks.

Steward. Peace be to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: I had your money.

Simeon enters from left and runs to greet them. They approach Joseph and bow down to him.

Joseph. Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive?

Judah. Thy servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive.

Joseph. Is this your youngest brother, of whom ye spake unto me?

[He beckons Benjamin, and embraces him.]

Joseph. God be gracious unto thee, my son. [*To the servants*] Set on bread.

Reader. And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves : because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews ; for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians. And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth : and the men marvelled one with another. And he took and sent messes unto them from before him : but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs. And they drank, and were merry with him.

[*Joseph takes the steward aside and whispers to him.*]

Joseph. Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth. And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn money.

[*The brothers are sent away and go out on left. Shortly afterwards Joseph sends the steward after them.*]

Joseph. Up, steward, follow after the men ; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good ? Is not this it in which my lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth ? Ye have done evil in so doing.

Reader. And he overtook them, and he spake unto them these same words. Then they speedily took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. And he searched, and began at the eldest, and left at the youngest : and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Then they rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city.

The brothers enter again by the right. They are very scared, and fall on the ground at Joseph's feet.

Joseph. What deed is this that ye have done ?

Know ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine ?

Judah. What shall we say unto my lord ? what shall we speak ? or how shall we clear ourselves ? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants : behold, we are my lord's servants, both we, and also he with whom the cup is found.

Joseph. God forbid that I should do so : but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant ; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father.

Judah. Oh my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant : for thou art even as Pharaoh. My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother ? And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one ; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him. And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father : for if he should leave his father, his father would die. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more. And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. And our father said, Go again, and buy us a little food. And we said, We cannot go down : if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down : for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us. And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons : and the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces ; and I have not seen him since : and if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. Now therefore when I come to thy

servant my father, and the lad be not with us ; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life ; it shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die : and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave. For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever. Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord ; and let the lad go up with his brethren. For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me ? Lest peradventure I see evil that shall come on my father.

Joseph. Cause every man to go out from before me.

[The servants go out.]

Joseph. I am Joseph !

[Pause. The brothers cannot believe their ears.]

Joseph. Doth my father yet live ? Come near to me, I pray you. I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, or angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither : for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land : and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be ploughing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God : and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. *[The brothers are amazed at this kindness. They look doubtfully at Joseph, wondering whether he is playing another trick upon them.]* Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt : come down unto me, tarry not : and thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's chil-

dren, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast : and there will I nourish thee ; for there are yet five years of famine ; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty ! And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you. And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen ; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

Joseph embraces Benjamin once more, and his brothers go out on left. Pharaoh enters from right.

Pharaoh. What is this that is noised abroad ? Are thy brethren indeed come ?

Joseph. They are, O Pharaoh, bringing with them my youngest brother Benjamin.

Pharaoh. Say unto thy brethren, This do ye ; lade your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan ; and take your father and your households, and come unto me : and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land. Now thou art commanded, this do ye ; take you wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. Also regard not your stuff ; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours.

Reader. And the children of Israel did so : and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way. To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment ; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment. And to his father he sent after this manner ; ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she-asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way. So he sent his brethren away, and they departed. And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father, and they told him

that Joseph was yet alive, and was governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not. And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them : and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived. And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac. And Jacob rose up from Beer-sheba : and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him : his sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt.

SCENE VII. *Jacob meets Joseph*

Reader. And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him ; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while.

Jacob. Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive.

Joseph. I will go up, and tell Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren, and my father's house, which were in the land of Canaan, are come unto me ; and the men are shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle ; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have. And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What is your occupation ? that ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth

even until now, both we, and also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians.

All go out on the left, except Joseph and five of his brethren. Pharaoh enters on the right. All bow to him.

Joseph. My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they are in the land of Goshen.

Pharaoh. What is your occupation?

Judah. Thy servants are shepherds, both we, and also our fathers. For to sojourn in the land are we come; for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks; for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen.

Pharaoh. Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee: the land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest any able men among them, then make them rulers over my cattle.

Jacob enters.

Pharaoh. How old art thou?

Jacob. The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.

Reader. And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families. And

Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen ; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly. And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years : so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years.

SCENE VIII. *The Death of Jacob*

Jacob is lying on his couch, sick unto death. A servant enters.

Servant. Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee.

Joseph enters and casts himself down by his father's couch.

Jacob. God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, and said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people ; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession. And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine ; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine. And thy issue, which thou begettest after them, shall be thine ; and shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance. And as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath : and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath ; the same is Bethlehem.

Joseph's two sons enter.

Jacob. Who are these ?

Joseph. They are my sons, whom God hath given to me in this place.

Jacob. Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them. I had not thought to see thy face: and, lo, God hath showed me also thy seed. God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, and the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.

[Jacob lays his right hand upon the head of Ephraim.]

Joseph. Not so, my father: for this is the firstborn; *[pointing to Manasseh]* put thy right hand upon his head.

Jacob. I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.

[Jacob calls in his sons.]

Jacob. Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days.

Assemble yourselves, and hear, ye sons of Jacob;
And hearken unto Israel your father.

Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might, and the
beginning of my strength;

The excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power.

Unstable as water, thou shalt not have the excellency.

Simeon and Levi are brethren;

Weapons of violence are their swords.

O my soul, come not thou into their council;

Unto their assembly, my glory, be not thou united;

For in their anger they slew a man,

And in their self-will they houghed an ox.

Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce;

And their wrath, for it was cruel:

I will divide them in Jacob,

And scatter them in Israel.

Judah, thee shall thy brethren praise:

Thy hand shall be on the neck of thine enemies ;
Thy father's sons shall bow down before thee.

Judah is a lion's whelp ;

From the prey, my son, thou art gone up :

He stooped down, he couched as a lion,

And as a lioness ; who shall rouse him up ?

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,

Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,

Until Shiloh come ;

And unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be.

He hath washed his garments in wine,

And his vesture in the blood of grapes :

His eyes shall be red with wine,

And his teeth white with milk.

Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea :

And he shall be for an haven of ships ;

And his border shall be upon Zidon.

Issachar is a strong ass,

Couching down between the sheepfolds.

Dan shall judge his people,

As one of the tribes of Israel.

Dan shall be a serpent in the way,

An adder in the path,

That biteth the horse's heels,

So that his rider falleth backward.

I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.

Gad, a troop shall press upon him :

But he shall press upon their heel.

Out of Asher his bread shall be fat,

And he shall yield royal dainties.

Naphtali is a hind let loose :

He giveth goodly words.

Joseph is a fruitful bough,

A fruitful bough by a fountain ;

His branches run over the wall.

The archers have sorely grieved him,

And shot at him, and persecuted him :

But his bow abode in strength,

And the arms of his hands were made strong,
By the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob,
Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee,
And by the Almighty, who shall bless thee,
With blessings of Heaven above,
Blessings of the deep that coucheth beneath.
The blessings of thy father
Have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors
Unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills :
They shall be on the head of Joseph,
And on the crown of the head of him that was separate
from his brethren.

Benjamin is a wolf that ravineth :
In the morning he shall devour the prey,
And at even he shall divide the spoil.

I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a burying-place : there they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife ; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife ; and there I buried Leah : the field and the cave that is therein, which was purchased from the children of Heth.

Reader. And when Jacob made an end of charging his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.

And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him. And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father : and the physicians embalmed Israel. And forty days were fulfilled for him ; for so are fulfilled the days of embalming : and the Egyptians wept for him three score and ten days.

THE EXODUS

THE PLAYERS

MOSES.

AARON.

PHARAOH.

Pharaoh's Counsellors.

Magicians.

Taskmasters.

Israelites.

Egyptians.

Slave.

THE EXODUS

PROLOGUE

Reader. Now Pharaoh commanded that all male children of the Israelites should be thrown into the river so soon as they were born. And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi. And the woman bare a son, and when she saw that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months. And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink. And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river; and her maidens walked along by the riverside; and she saw the ark among the flags, and sent her maid to fetch it. And she opened it, and saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children. Then said the sister of the babe, who was standing by, Shall I go and call thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee? And Pharaoh's daughter said, Go, and the maid went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it. And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son.

And she called his name Moses, and said, Because I drew him out of the water.

SCENE I. *The Call to Moses*

Moses is watching the sheep of his father-in-law in the desert. He has been musing over the slaying of the Egyptian, and his flight and subsequent marriage, when a strange sight attracts his attention.

Reader. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush : and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.

Moses. I will turn aside now, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burned.

[He goes up to the bush, fearfully. The Voice of God comes from off the stage.]

Voice of God. Moses, Moses.

Moses. Here am I.

[He is very much afraid, yet the gentleness of the Voice encourages him.]

Voice of God. Draw not nigh hither : put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

[Moses takes off his shoes, and falls on his knees.]

Voice of God. I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

[Moses hides his face in awe.]

Voice of God. I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters ; for I know their sorrows ; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land, and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey ; unto the land of

the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite. And now, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me : moreover, I have seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

Moses. Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt ?

Voice of God. Certainly I will be with thee ; and this shall be the token unto thee, that I have sent thee : when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

Moses. Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you ; and they shall say to me, What is his name ? what shall I say unto them ?

Voice of God. I AM THAT I AM : Thus shalt thou say unto the people of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. Thus shalt thou say unto the people of Israel, The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you : this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations. Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, hath appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt : and I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. And they shall hearken to thy voice : and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The Lord, the God of the Hebrews,

hath met with us : and now let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God. And I know that the king of Egypt will not give you leave to go, no, not by a mighty hand. And I will put forth my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof : and after that he will let you go. And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians : and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty : but every woman shall ask of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment : and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters ; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.

Moses. But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice : for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee.

Voice of God. What is that in thine hand ?

Moses. A rod.

Voice of God. Cast it on the ground.

[*Moses casts his rod on the ground. It immediately becomes a serpent, and he recoils from it in horror.*]

Voice of God. Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail : that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.

[*Moses obeys, and the snake turns back into a rod.*]

Voice of God. Put now thine hand into thy bosom.

[*Moses does so. When he withdraws it, he finds it is the dreaded white colour, the sign of leprosy.*]

Voice of God. Put thine hand into thy bosom again.

Reader. And he put his hand into his bosom again ; and when he took it out of his bosom, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh.

Voice of God. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the

first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe even these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land : and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land.

Moses. Oh Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant : for I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

Voice of God. Who hath made man's mouth ? or who maketh a man dumb, or deaf, or seeing, or blind ? is it not I the Lord ? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt speak.

Moses. Oh Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send.

Voice of God. Is there not Aaron thy brother the Levite ? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee : and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put the words in his mouth : and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people : and it shall come to pass, that he shall be to thee a mouth, and thou shalt be to him as God. And thou shalt take in thine hand this rod, wherewith thou shalt do the signs. When thou goest back into Egypt, see that thou do before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in thine hand : but I will harden his heart, and he will not let the people go. And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, my firstborn : and I have said unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me ; and thou hast refused to let him go : behold, I will slay thy son, thy firstborn.

Reader. And Moses took his wife, and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt : and Moses took the rod in his hand.

SCENE II. *The Plagues*

Pharaoh is sitting on his throne, surrounded by his counsellors and magicians. Moses and Aaron are standing before him.

Moses. Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.

Pharaoh. Who is the Lord, that I should hearken unto his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, and moreover I will not let Israel go.

Moses. The God of the Hebrews hath met with us : let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice unto the Lord our God ; lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword.

Pharaoh. Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, loose the people from their works? Get you unto your burdens. Behold, the people of the land are now many, and ye make them rest from their burdens. Summon me hither the taskmasters.

The taskmasters enter, and bow before him.

Pharaoh. Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore : let them go and gather straw for themselves. And the tale of the bricks, which they did make heretofore, ye shall lay upon them ; ye shall not diminish aught thereof : for they be idle ; therefore they cry, saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God. Let heavier work be laid upon the men, that they may labour therein ; and let them not regard lying words. *[The taskmasters go out.]*

There is an interval of some days. The court is sitting as before. Two leaders of Israel enter and prostrate themselves before Pharaoh.

First Leader. Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy

servants ? There is no straw given unto thy servants, and they say to us, Make brick : and behold, thy servants are beaten ; but the fault is in thine own people.

Pharaoh. Ye are idle, ye are idle : therefore ye say, Let us go and sacrifice to the Lord. Go therefore now, and work ; for there shall be no straw given you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of bricks.

[They retire, and hiss at Moses as they go.]

Second Leader. The Lord look upon you, and judge ; because ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us.

[Moses almost begins to doubt the wisdom of what he has done.]

Moses. Lord, wherefore hast thou evil entreated this people ? Why is it that thou hast sent me ? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath evil entreated this people ; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all.

[The Voice of God replies. It is so low, that none save Moses can hear it.]

Voice of God. I am JEHOVAH : and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH I was not known to them. And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their sojournings, wherein they sojourned. And moreover I have heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage ; and I have remembered my covenant. Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am Jehovah, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched-out arm, and with great judgments : and I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God : and ye shall know that I am Jehovah your God, which bringeth you out

from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning which I lifted up my hand to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob ; and I will give it you for an heritage : I am Jehovah. Go in, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land.

Moses. Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me ; how then shall Pharaoh hear me ?

Voice of God. I am the Lord : speak thou unto Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I speak unto thee.

Moses. Behold, how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me ?

Voice of God. See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh : and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet. Thou shalt speak all that I command thee : and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh will not hearken unto you, and I will lay my hand on Egypt, and bring forth my hosts, my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them. When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Show a miracle for you : then thou shalt say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and cast it down before Pharaoh, that it become a serpent.

Moses. Cast down thy rod, O Aaron, and let it become a serpent.

[Aaron casts his rod to the ground, and it immediately turns to a serpent.]

Pharaoh. Call me my magicians that they also may do this thing.

The magicians enter.

Pharaoh. Cast ye down your rods, and let them become serpents, even as the rod of Aaron here.

[The magicians cast down their rods, which also turn to serpents. Aaron's rod swallows up the rods of the magicians. Pharaoh is not convinced, and refuses to let the people go.]

Reader. And Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them ; as the Lord had spoken. *[There is an interval of a few days. Moses is once more before Pharaoh.]*

Voice of God. Pharaoh's heart is stubborn, he refuseth to let the people go. Thou shalt say unto him, The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, hath sent me unto thee, saying, Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness : and behold, hitherto thou hast not hearkened. Thus saith the Lord, In this shalt thou know that I am the Lord : behold, I will smite with the rod that is in mine hand, upon the waters which are in the river, and they shall be turned to blood. And the fish that is in the river shall die, and the river shall stink ; and the Egyptians shall loathe to drink water from the river.

Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and stretch out thine hand, that the waters of Egypt, their rivers, their streams, their pools and all their ponds of water may become blood ; and there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.

Aaron lifts up his rod as God commands. There is a pause. Cries are heard without, and a slave rushes in, and throws himself at the feet of Pharaoh.

Slave. O Pharaoh, is it permitted to me to speak ?
[Pharaoh looks at him uneasily.]

Pharaoh. Speak on.

Slave. O Pharaoh, the waters that were in the river are smitten, and turned into blood. And the fish that were in the river have died, and

the river stinketh that we cannot drink the water from it.

Pharaoh. Let my magicians do the like.

Reader. And the magicians of Egypt did in like manner with their enchantments: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had spoken.

And all the Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink; for they could not drink of the water of the river. And seven days were fulfilled, after that the Lord had smitten the river.

[The seven days have passed. Moses, standing before Pharaoh, again hears the Voice of God.]

Voice of God. Go, say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may serve me. And if thou refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite all borders with frogs: and the river shall swarm with frogs, which shall go up and come into thine house, and into thy bedchamber, and upon thy bed, and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneading-troughs: and the frogs shall come up both upon thee, and upon all thy servants.

Say unto Aaron, Stretch forth thine hand with thy rod, and cause frogs to come up upon the land of Egypt.

Reader. And Aaron stretched out his hand, and the frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt. And the magicians did in like manner with their enchantments, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt.

Pharaoh. Intreat the Lord, that he take away the frogs from me, and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may sacrifice unto the Lord.

Moses. Have thou this glory over me: against what time shall I intreat for thee, and for thy servants, and for thy people, that the frogs be destroyed from thee and thy houses, and remain in the river only?

Pharaoh. Against to-morrow.

Moses. Be it according to thy word: that thou mayest know there is none like unto the Lord our God. And the frogs shall depart from thee, and from thy houses, and from thy servants, and from thy people; they shall remain in the river only.

Reader. And Moses cried unto the Lord concerning the frogs which he had brought upon Pharaoh. And the Lord did according to the word of Moses; and the frogs died out of the houses, out of the courts, and out of the fields. And they gathered them together in heaps.

But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had spoken.

[There is another interval, and once again the Voice of God comes to Moses as he stands pleading with Pharaoh.]

Voice of God. Say now unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may serve me. Else, if thou wilt not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses: and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground whereon they are. And I will sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there; to the end thou mayest know I am the Lord in the midst of the earth. And I will put a division between my people and thy people: by to-morrow shall this sign be.

Moses. Hear now, O Pharaoh, this thing which the Lord will do unto thee. For unless thou let the people go, the Lord will send swarms of flies upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses. And he will sever the land of Goshen in that day, that no swarms of flies shall be there, where his people dwell, that thou mayest know he is the Lord in the midst of the earth. And to-morrow shall this sign be.

Pharaoh. His people shall not go.

[*A day passes. Pharaoh's stubbornness is beginning to break.*]

Pharaoh. Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land. For there hath come a grievous swarm of flies into my house, and into my servants' houses and in all the land of Egypt. And all the land is corrupted by the flies. Go therefore and offer sacrifice, that these swarms be taken away.

Moses. It is not meet so to do ; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God : lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us ? We will go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the Lord our God, as he shall command us.

Pharaoh. I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness ; only ye shall not go very far away : intreat for me.

Moses. Behold, I go out from thee, and I will intreat the Lord that the swarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people, only let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the Lord.

Reader. And Moses went out from Pharaoh, and intreated the Lord. And the Lord did according to the word of Moses ; and he removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people ; there remained not one. And Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and he did not let the people go.

[*God sends a murrain on the beasts, a plague of boils and of hail, but still Pharaoh refuses to let the people go. God speaks again to Moses.*]

Voice of God. Speak again unto Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might show these my signs in the midst of them : and that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and

of thy son's son, what things I have wrought upon Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that ye may know that I am the Lord.

Moses. Thus saith the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me? Let my people go, that they may serve me. Else, if thou refuse to let my people go, behold, to-morrow will I bring locusts into thy border: and they shall cover the face of the earth, and they shall eat the residue of that which is escaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail, and shall eat every tree which groweth for you out of the field: and thy houses shall be filled, and the houses of all thy servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians; as neither thy fathers, nor thy fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were upon the earth unto this day.

[The Egyptians fear very greatly when they hear of this, the most terrible of the plagues. They approach Pharaoh, and kneel at his feet, in humble entreaty.]

Servant. How long shall this man be a snare unto us? Let the men go, that they may serve the Lord their God: knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?

[Pharaoh is exceedingly agitated. He ponders over their words for a few minutes, and then addresses Moses.]

Pharaoh. Go, serve the Lord your God: but who are they that shall go?

Moses. We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we must hold a feast unto the Lord.

Pharaoh. So be the Lord with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: look to it; for evil is before you. Not so: go now ye that are men, and serve the Lord; for that is what ye desire.

[Pharaoh rises in wrath from his throne, and summoning

his attendants to accompany him, sweeps from the room. When the tumult has died down, the Voice of God is heard, speaking to Moses.

Voice of God. Stretch out thine hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come up upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land, even all that the hail hath left.

[Moses stretches out his hand. A faint whisper is heard in the distance. It gradually grows louder and louder, until with a roar the east wind bursts upon the land in all its fury.]

Reader. And Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the Lord brought an east wind upon the land, and the east wind brought the locusts. And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the borders of Egypt; very grievous were they; before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such. For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left: and there remained not any green thing, either tree or herb of the field, through all the land of Egypt.

A confusion of voices is heard outside, and Pharaoh enters.

Pharaoh. I have sinned against the Lord your God, and against you. Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once, and intreat the Lord your God, that he may take away from me this death only.

Moses lifts up his hands to heaven, and asks God as Pharaoh desires him. The roar of the east wind ceases; there is a short period of calm, and then the noise of wind gradually rising once more. It is the west wind.

Reader. And the Lord turned an exceeding strong west wind, which took up the locusts, and drove them into the Red Sea; there remained not one locust in

all the border of Egypt. But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go.

[Once more Moses is in the presence of Pharaoh, beseeching him to let the people go. The Voice of God comes to him.]

Voice of God. Yet one plague more will I bring upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether.

Moses. Thus saith the Lord, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maid-servant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of cattle. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there hath been none like it, nor shall be like it any more. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. And all these thy servants shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me, saying, Get thee out, and all the people that follow thee: and after that I will go out.

[This final threat terrifies Pharaoh as none of the previous ones have terrified him. He tries to hide his fear by a show of anger, and followed by his servants, goes out, leaving Moses alone.]

Voice of God. Pharaoh will not hearken unto you: that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.

[Moses remains with his head sunk in his hands. There is an interval. A low wail is heard in the distance, gradually growing louder. It is repeated, until the air is rent with shrieks from all sides. Moses starts up.]

Reader. And it came to pass at midnight, that the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon ; and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians ; and there was a great cry in Egypt ; for there was not a house where there was not one dead.

Pharaoh rushes in. *He is prostrate with grief, for his eldest son is dead. His servants and followers are all grief-stricken—they have all lost one whom they love.*

Pharaoh. Rise up, get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel ; and go, serve the Lord, as ye have said. Take both your flocks, and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone ; and bless me also.

Servants. Go, get you gone. We be all dead men.

Reader. And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading-troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders.

And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them ; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle.

SCENE III. *The Crossing of the Red Sea*

Reader. And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not by the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near ; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt : but God led the people about, by the way of the wilderness by the

Red Sea : and the children of Israel went up armed out of Egypt. And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him : for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you ; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you. And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness. And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way ; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light ; that they might go by day and by night : the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, departed not from before the people.

[Moses is resting with the chiefs of the Israelites before attempting the crossing of the Red Sea.]

Voice of God. Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn back and encamp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, before Baal-zephon : over against it shall ye encamp by the sea. And Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he shall follow them ; and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host ; and the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord.

Reader. And it was told the king of Egypt that the people were fled : and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was changed toward the people, and they said, What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us ? And he made ready his chariots, and took his people with him : and he took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over all of them, and pursued after them.

[The noise of the chariots, and the cries of the pursuers are heard in the distance. The Israelites start up in dismay.]

First Man. Behold, the Egyptians pursue us !

[They all gaze into the distance (to the left of the

stage), and anxiously watch the approach of their enemies.

Second Man. See, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army.

Third Man. They come, they overtake us. O Lord God of Israel, why didst thou ever bring us out of Egypt? Deliver us now out of the hands of these our enemies if thou art in very truth our God.

[The Egyptians march irresistibly on. You can plainly hear the cries of the charioteers as they urge their horses to still greater efforts, and the exultant cries of the soldiers. The Israelites give way to despair, and in their terror turn upon Moses.]

First Man. Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? Wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to bring us forth out of Egypt?

Second Man. Is not this the word that we spake unto thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians?

Third Man. It were better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.

Moses. Fear ye not. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will work for you to-day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

O Lord, I beseech thee, show these Israelites that thou art indeed the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac, who hast delivered us out of the hands of the Egyptians.

Voice of God. Wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward. And lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go into the midst of the sea on dry ground. And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall go in after them: and I will get

me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, and upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

[Moses lifts up his hand, gazing into the distance to the right of stage. The Israelites look on in amazement.]

First Man. What is this that he doeth? Why lifteth he his rod over the waters?

Second Man. The waters! The waters! See how they divide.

[A great shout is heard from the right] The waters break! Behold! The dry land. The finger of God is on the waters!

Reader. And the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the waters were a wall to them upon their right hand, and upon their left.

[The children of Israel cross in safety, and watch the oncoming Egyptians from the other side of the sea.]

First Man. Behold, they pursue us even into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

Second Man. See their chariots. The Lord hath taken off their chariot wheels, that they drive them heavily.

Third Man. See, they stop and pause in the midst. They look back.

[A cry from the left] Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians.

Voice of God. Stretch out thine hand, O Moses, over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.

[Moses stretches out his rod a second time.]

First Man. The waters! Behold how they close!

Second Man. The waters return. They cover the

chariots and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came after us into the sea.

[There is a pause. Tense silence reigns among the Israelites, broken only by the distant cries of the drowning Egyptians.]

Third Man. Behold the work of God. There remaineth not so much as one of them.

Reader. And the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea ; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians ; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. And Israel saw the great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians, and the people feared the Lord : and they believed in the Lord, and in his servant Moses. Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord.

Moses. I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously :

The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

The Lord is my strength and my song,

And he is become my salvation :

This is my God, and I will praise him ;

My father's God, and I will exalt him.

The Lord is a man of war :

The Lord is his name.

Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea :

And his chosen captains are sunk in the Red Sea.

The deeps cover them :

They went down into the depths like a stone.

Thy right hand, O Lord, is glorious in power,

Thy right hand, O Lord, dasheth in pieces the enemy.

And in the greatness of thine excellency thou overthrowest them that rise up against thee :

Thou sendest forth thy wrath, it consumeth them as stubble.

And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were
piled up,

The floods stood upright as an heap ;

The deeps were congealed in the heart of the sea.

The enemy said,

I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil :

My lust shall be satisfied upon them ;

I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.

Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them :

They sank as lead in the mighty waters.

Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods ?

Who is like thee, glorious in holiness,

Fearful in praises, doing wonders ?

Thou stretchedst out thy right hand,

The earth swallowed them.

Thou in thy mercy hast led the people which thou hast
redeemed :

Thou hast guided them in thy strength to thy holy
habitation.

The peoples have heard, they tremble :

Pangs have taken hold on the inhabitants of Philistia.

Then were the dukes of Edom amazed ;

The mighty men of Moab, trembling taketh hold upon
them :

All the inhabitants of Canaan are melted away.

Terror and dread falleth upon them ;

By the greatness of thine arm they are as still as a
stone ;

Till thy people pass over, O Lord,

Till the people pass over which thou hast purchased.

Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the
mountain of thine inheritance,

The place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to
dwell in,

The sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have estab-
lished.

The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.

For the horses of Pharaoh went in with his chariots

and with his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them ; but the children of Israel walked on dry land in the midst of the sea.

Reader. And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand ; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.

Miriam. Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously ;
The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

SAMSON

THE PLAYERS

MANOAH.

Wife of Manoah.

SAMSON, *the son of Manoah.*

Wife of Samson.

Companions of Samson.

DELILAH.

Men of the Philistines.

Servants.

Angel.

SAMSON

SCENE I. *The Coming of Samson*

*The wife of Manoah is sitting alone before her house.
She looks up and sees an angel standing before her.*

Angel. Behold now thou hast no child, but shortly thou shalt bear a son. Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink no wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing : all that I command thee, observe.

For, lo, thou shalt bear a son ; and no razor shall come upon his head : for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from birth : and he shall begin to save Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.

[The angel goes out. The woman rises, and runs to the door of the house.]

Woman. Manoah, Manoah, come hither.

Her husband comes in hurriedly.

Woman. A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible ; and I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name : but he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt bear a son ; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing : for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from his birth, to the day of his death.

Manoah. O Lord, I pray thee, let the man of God whom thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born.

The angel enters. They bow before him.

Manoah. Art thou the man that spakest unto the woman ?

Angel. I am.

Manoah. Now let thy words come to pass : what shall be the manner of the child, and what shall be his work ?

Angel. Of all that I said unto the woman let her beware. She may not eat of anything that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing ; all that I commanded her let her observe.

Manoah. I pray thee, let us detain thee, that we may make ready a kid for thee.

Angel. Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread : and if thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer it unto the Lord.

Manoah. What is thy name, that when thy words come to pass we may do thee honour ?

Angel. Wherefore askest thou after my name, seeing it is secret ?

Reader. So Manoah took the kid with the meal offering, and offered it upon the rock unto the Lord : and the angel did wondrously, and Manoah and his wife looked on. For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from the altar, that the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar : and Manoah and his wife looked on ; and they fell on their faces to the ground. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the Lord.

Manoah. We shall surely die, because we have seen God.

Woman. If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering and a meal offering at our hand, neither would he have showed us all these things, nor would at this time have told such things as these.

Reader. And a child was born, and they called his name Samson : and the child grew, and the Lord blessed him.

SCENE II. *The Mighty Deeds of Samson*

Samson is speaking to his father and mother.

Samson. I have seen a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines : now therefore get her for me to wife.

Manoah. Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the heathen Philistines ?

Samson. Get her for me ; for she pleaseth me well.

[*They move to go out, Samson lagging behind. Just as Samson too is about to leave the stage, a lion darts out upon him.*

Reader. Behold, a young lion roared against Samson, and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand.

Samson leaves the body of the lion, and goes out after his parents. He returns after an interval, accompanied by his parents, and wife. He speaks aside.

Samson. Behold, there is the carcass of the lion which I slew : I will go and see it.

[*He approaches the body.*

Reader. Behold, there was a swarm of bees in the body of the lion, and honey. And he took it in his hands, and went on, eating as he went. And he came to his father and mother, and gave unto them, and they did eat : but he told them not that he had taken the honey out of the body of the lion.

Samson. Here will we make our feast. Call hither my companions.

Thirty young men, the companions of Samson, enter.

Samson. Let me now put forth a riddle to you : if ye can declare it me, and find it out, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of raiment : but if ye cannot declare it me, then shall ye give me thirty linen garments and thirty changes of raiment.

First Man. Put forth thy riddle, that we may hear it.

Samson. Out of the eater came forth meat,
And out of the strong came forth sweetness.

[The men consult together. Samson goes out.]

Second Man. Nay, I cannot find out the riddle.

Third Man. Nor any of us. Let us ask Samson's wife.
[They approach Samson's wife menacingly.]

First Man. Entice thy husband, that he may declare unto us the riddle, lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire : have ye called us to impoverish us ? is it not so ?

[They see Samson coming, and go out. The woman approaches her husband, and speaks with tears in her voice.]

Woman. Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not : thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people, and hast not told it me.

Samson. Behold, I have not told it my father nor my mother, and shall I tell it thee ?

Woman. Nay, my lord, but tell me, thy wife.

[She bursts into tears.]

Samson. Here is the riddle. What is sweeter than honey ? And what is stronger than a lion ?

He goes out, and the men enter.

First Man. What is the answer ? Quick, hath he told thee ?

Woman. Yea. What is sweeter than honey? and what is stronger than a lion?

Samson enters.

Second Man. Prepare thy linen and thy raiment, O Samson, for we will answer thy riddle.

Samson. What then is the answer?

Second Man. What is sweeter than honey? and what is stronger than a lion?

Samson. If ye had not plowed with my heifer, Ye had not found out my riddle.

Reader. And the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon, and smote thirty men of them, and took their spoil, and gave the changes of raiment unto them that declared the riddle.

SCENE III. *Samson and Delilah*

On the left of the stage is the house of Delilah. She is sitting at the feet of Samson, caressing him. Hearing a slight noise to the right, she rises, leaves Samson, and comes to the door, where she sees the Philistines, who caution her to silence.

First Philistine. Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver.

Delilah. I will do as thou bidst, and ask him.

[Delilah goes in to Samson.]

Delilah. Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee.

Samson. If they bind me with seven green withes that were never dried, then shall I become weak, and be as another man.

[*Delilah waits until Samson is asleep, and then steals out to the waiting Philistines.*

Delilah. If he be bound with seven green withes that were never dried, then will he lose his strength, and be as other men.

Second Philistine. Behold, here be seven green withes that were never dried. Bind him, and deliver him to us, and thou shalt have thy reward.

[*Delilah goes in to Samson, and binds him with the withes.*

Delilah. The Philistines be upon thee, Samson.

Reader. And he brake the withes, as a thread of tow is broken when it touches the fire.

Delilah. Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies : now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound.

Samson. If they only bind me with new ropes wherewith no work hath been done, then shall I become weak, and be as another man.

Reader. So Delilah took new ropes, and bound him therewith.

[*She goes out and tells the Philistines what she has done, and warns them to be ready.*

Delilah. The Philistines be upon thee, Samson.

[*Samson jumps up and breaks the ropes like thread.*

Delilah. Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies : tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound.

Samson. If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web.

[*Delilah coaxes him to sleep once more, and then fastens the locks of his hair.*

Delilah. The Philistines be upon thee, Samson.

[*Samson rises, and easily breaks away.*

Delilah. How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart is not with me ? Thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told wherein thy great strength lieth. Now tell me, I pray thee, for I will not

cease from asking until thou hast told me in very truth.

[Samson is worn out with her entreaties.]

Samson. There hath not come a razor upon mine head ; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from birth : if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man.

[Delilah once more sits at his feet, and lulls him to sleep.]

She then goes outside and calls to the lord of the Philistines.

Delilah. Bring thy men, for I have found out now the secret of his strength.

Philistine. Nay, these three times hast thou deceived me.

Delilah. Come up this once, for he hath told me all his heart.

The enemy gather quietly round, and Delilah returns to Samson. She makes quite sure that he is still asleep, and then motions to one of the Philistines outside. He comes in, and very quietly shaves off Samson's hair.

Delilah. The Philistines be upon thee, Samson.

[Samson jumps up as before. He does not realize at first that his strength is gone from him.]

Samson. I will go out as at other times, and shake myself.

Reader. For he wist not that the Lord was departed from him. And the Philistines laid hold on him, and put out his eyes ; and they brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass ; and he did grind in the prison-house.

Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven.

SCENE IV. *The Death of Samson*

The Philistines are feasting.

Reader. And the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon, their god, and to rejoice : because Dagon had delivered Samson their enemy into their hands.

First Man. Come, brethren, rejoice and be merry. Hath not Dagon delivered Samson our enemy into our hands ?

Second Man. Yea, we have him now, the destroyer of our country, which hath slain so many of us.

Third Man. Where is he now ?

First Man. He grindeth corn at the mill.

Second Man. Call for Samson, that he may make us sport.

Two servants go out, and return leading Samson between them. He is a pitiful figure in his blindness.

Samson. Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them.

[The feasters mock at this sign of weakness.]

First Man. Behold, he is tired already. Doth it tire thee, O mighty giant, to grind in the mill ?

[Samson makes no reply to their taunts, but looks up to heaven.]

Reader. Now the house was full of men and women ; and all the lords of the Philistines were there ; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport.

Samson. O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.

Reader. And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and leaned upon

them, the one with his right hand, and the other with his left.

Samson. Let me die with the Philistines.

Reader. And he bowed himself with all his might ; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein.

So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.

Then his brethren and all the house of his father came down, and took him, and brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the burying-place of Manoah his father.

SAUL

THE PLAYERS

SAUL, *King of Israel.*
JONATHAN, *the son of Saul.*
DAVID, *the friend of Jonathan.*
SAMUEL, *the prophet.*
ABNER, *the captain of the host.*
AGAG, *King of the Amalekites.*
GOLIATH, *the champion of the Philistines.*
Servant of Saul.
Two Maidens.
Armour-bearer of Jonathan.
Shield-bearer of Goliath.
Messenger.
The two brothers of David.
Soldier.
Israelites.
Philistines.
Israelite women.
The Witch of Endor.

SAUL

SCENE I. *The Anointing of Saul*

Saul and his servant are seeking the asses of Kish.

Saul. Come, let us return ; my father spake unto me saying, Arise, go seek the asses, and I have passed through Mount Ephraim, and the land of Shalisha, and the land of Shalim, and I have found them not. We will return, lest my father leave caring for the asses, and take thought for us.

Servant. Behold now, there is in this city a man of God, and he is a man that is held in honour ; all that he saith cometh surely to pass : now let us go thither ; peradventure he can tell us concerning our journey whereon we go.

Saul. But, behold, if we go, what shall we bring the man ? For the bread is spent in our vessels, and there is not a present to bring to the man of God : what have we ?

Servant. Behold, I have in my hand the fourth part of a shekel of silver : that will I give to the man of God, to tell us our way.

Saul. Well said ; come, let us go.

Two maidens enter, carrying water-pots.

Saul. Is the seer here ?

Maidens. He is ; behold, he is before thee : make haste now, for he is come to-day into the city ; for

the people have a sacrifice to-day in the high place : as soon as ye be come into the city, ye shall straight-way find him, before he go up to the high place to eat : for the people will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the sacrifice ; and afterwards they eat that be bidden. Now therefore get you up ; for at this time ye shall find him.

Reader. And they went up to the city ; and as they came within the city, behold, Samuel came out against them, for to go up to the high place. Now the Lord had revealed unto Samuel a day before Saul came, saying, To-morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be prince over my people Israel, and he shall save my people out of the hand of the Philistines : for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me.

Samuel enters upon the left. Saul goes up and greets him.

Saul. Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house is.

Samuel. I am the seer ; go up before me unto the high place, for ye shall eat with me to-day : and in the morning I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is in thine heart. And as for thine asses that were lost three days ago, set not thy mind on them ; for they are found. And for whom is all that is desirable in Israel ? Is it not for thee, and for all thy father's house ?

Saul. Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel ? And my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin ? Wherefore then speakest thou to me after this manner ?

Reader. And Samuel took Saul and his servant, and brought them into the guest-chamber, and made them sit in the chiefest place among them that were bidden, which were about thirty persons.

They enter the high place and sit down at table. A servant enters.

Samuel. Bring the portion that I gave thee, of which I said unto thee, Set it by thee.

[Servant places dish before Saul.]

Samuel. Behold that which hath been reserved. Set it before thee, and eat; because unto the appointed time hath it been kept for thee, for I said, I have invited the people.

[A day passes. Saul and his servant are preparing to go. Samuel is taking leave of them.]

Samuel. Bid thy servant pass on before us, but stand thou still at this time, that I may cause thee to hear the word of God.

Reader. Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him.

Samuel. Is it not that the Lord hath anointed thee prince over his inheritance? When thou art departed from me to-day, then thou shalt find two men by Rachel's sepulchre, in the border of Benjamin at Zelzah; and they will say unto thee, The asses which thou wentest to seek are found: and, lo, thy father hath left the care of the asses, and taketh thought for you, saying, What shall I do for my son? Then shalt thou go on forward from thence, and thou shalt come to the oak of Tabor, and there shall meet thee there three men going up to God to Bethel, one carrying three kids, and another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a bottle of wine: and they will salute thee, and give thee two loaves of bread; which thou shalt receive of their hand. After that thou shalt come to the hill of God, where is the garrison of the Philistines: and it shall come to pass, when thou art come thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a band of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a timbrel, and a pipe, and a harp, before them; and they shall be prophesy-

ing : and the spirit of the Lord will come mightily upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man. And let it be, when these signs are come unto thee, that thou do as occasion serve thee ; for God is with thee.

And thou shalt go down before m^e to Gilgal ; and, behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer burnt offerings, and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace offerings : seven days shalt thou tarry, till I come unto thee, and show thee what thou shalt do.

Reader. And it came to pass, when all that knew him beforetime saw that, behold, he prophesied with the prophets, then the people said one to another, What is this that is come unto the son of Kish ? Is Saul also among the prophets ?

And one of the same place answered and said, And who is their father ? Therefore it became a proverb, Is Saul also among the prophets ? And when he had made an end of prophesying, he came to the high place.

SCENE II. *The Coronation of Saul*

Samuel is standing in the middle of the stage. The people, headed by their leaders, are listening to his words.

Samuel. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all the kingdoms that oppressed you : but ye have this day rejected your God. [*The people stir uneasily.*] Ye have said unto him, Nay, but set a king over us. Now therefore, present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes, and by your thousands.

[*The heads of the tribes move forward, and prepare to cast lots. Twelve smooth pebbles are chosen, upon*

each of which the name of a tribe is inscribed. The pebbles are cast into a leather bag, and Samuel, coming forward amidst a general hush, draws one out. All press round, and cry "Benjamin, Benjamin!" More pebbles are cast into the bag, this time inscribed with the names of the families of the tribe of Benjamin. The lot is again drawn, and the family of the Matrites is taken. Another casting of lots reveals that Saul, the son of Kish, is chosen king.

People. Saul! Saul! Where is he? Where has he gone? Where does he hide?

[Several of the people run and search for the missing king. They return unsuccessful. He is nowhere to be found. Samuel holds up his hand for silence.

Samuel. Search over yonder. He hath hid himself among the stuff.

Reader. And they ran and fetched him thence; and when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward.

Saul has entered, and now stands by the side of Samuel.

Samuel. See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people?

People. God save the king! God save the king!

SCENE III. *The Proving of Saul*

A great crowd is gathered together in the market-place. They are talking together in low, anxious tones. Samuel is in their midst, conversing with a weary, mud-splashed messenger. Saul enters, looks around, and goes up to Samuel.

Saul. What aileth the people that they weep?

Samuel. Repeat once more thy story.

Messenger. Behold, Nahash the Ammonite came up,

and encamped against Jabesh-gilead. The men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee. And Nahash the Ammonite said unto them, On this condition will I make it with you, that all your right eyes be put out ; and I will lay it as a reproach upon all Israel. And the elders of Jabesh said unto him, Give us seven days' respite, that we may send messengers unto all the borders of Israel : and then, if there be none to save us, we will come out to thee. And behold they have sent me to thee with these tidings.

Saul. Whosoever cometh not after Saul and after Samuel, his oxen shall be cut in pieces.

[*He turns to the messenger*] To-morrow, by the time the sun is hot, ye shall have deliverance.

Reader. Therefore the men of Jabesh said, To-morrow we will come out unto you, and ye shall do with us all that seemeth good unto you. And it was so on the morrow, that Saul put the people in three companies ; and they came into the midst of the camp in the morning watch, and smote the Ammonites until the heat of the day : and it came to pass, that they which remained were scattered, so that two of them were not left together. And all the people came to Gilgal ; and there they made Saul king before the Lord in Gilgal ; and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace offerings before the Lord ; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

SCENE IV. *The Trial of Jonathan*

Jonathan and his armour-bearer are crouching on the left of the stage. On the right is the camp of the Philistines.

Jonathan. Come and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised : it may be that the Lord will

work for us : for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few.

Armour-bearer. Do all that is in thine heart : turn thee, behold I am with thee according to thy heart.

Jonathan. Behold, we will pass over unto the men, and we will discover ourselves unto them. If they say thus unto us, Tarry until we come to you ; then we will stand still in our place, and will not go up unto them. But if they say thus, Come up unto us ; then we will go up : for the Lord hath delivered them into our hand : and this shall be the sign unto us.

[They stand, wave their arms, and discover themselves to the Philistines.]

Philistines. Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they had hid themselves. Come up to us, and we will show you a thing.

Jonathan. Come up after me : for the Lord hath delivered them into the hand of Israel.

Reader. And Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armour-bearer after him : and they fell before Jonathan ; and his armour-bearer slew them after him. And that first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armour-bearer made, was about twenty men within as it were half a furrow's length in an acre of land. And there was a trembling in the camp, in the field, and among all the people ; the garrison, and the spoilers, they also trembled : and the earth quaked ; so there was an exceeding trembling. And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked ; and, behold, the multitude melted away, and they went hither and thither.

[Jonathan and the armour-bearer chase the Philistines, and all go out left. Jonathan enters again on the right. He meets one of his own people. He is very weary and hungry.]

Reader. And they came unto a wood, and, behold, the honey dropped, but no man put his hand to his mouth. But Jonathan heard not when his father

charged the people with the oath : wherefore he put forth the end of the rod that was in his hand, and dipped it in the honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth ; and his eyes were enlightened.

Israelite. Thy father straitly charged the people with an oath, saying, Cursed be the man that eateth food this day.

Jonathan. My father hath troubled the land : see, I pray you, how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey. How much more, if haply the people had eaten freely to-day of the spoil of their enemies which they found ? for now hath there been no great slaughter among the Philistines.

Reader. And Saul asked counsel of God, Shall I go down after the Philistines ? Wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel ? But he answered him not that day.

Saul and the people enter.

Saul. Draw nigh thither, all ye chiefs of the people : and know and see wherein this sin hath been this day. For, as the Lord liveth, which saveth Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die.

[*Nobody replies.*

Saul. Be ye on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side.

People. Do what seemeth good unto thee.

Saul. O Lord, show the right. [*They cast lots.*

Reader. And Jonathan and Saul were taken by lot : but the people escaped.

Saul. Cast lots between me and Jonathan my son.

[*Jonathan is taken.*

Saul. Tell me what thou hast done.

Jonathan. I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that was in mine hand ; and, lo, I must die.

Saul. God do so and more also : for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan.

People. Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day.

Reader. So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not. And Saul went up from following the Philistines: and the Philistines went to their own place. Now when Saul had taken the kingdom over Israel, he fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, and against the children of Ammon, and against Edom, and against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines: and whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed them.

SCENE V. *The Disobedience of Saul*

Saul and Samuel are talking together.

Reader. And Saul smote the Amalekites, from Havilah as thou goest to Shur, that is before Egypt. And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but everything that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly.

Samuel. Saul, Saul, what did I say unto thee?

Saul. Thou saidst, The Lord sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I have marked that which Amalek did to Israel, how he set himself against him in the way, when he came up out of Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both

man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.

Samuel. And now the voice of the Lord hath come unto me saying, It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king : for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments.

Saul. But why ? I have performed the commandment of the Lord.

Samuel. What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of oxen which I hear ?

Saul. They have brought them from the Amalekites : for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God ; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

Samuel. Stay, and I will tell thee what the Lord hath said to me this night.

Saul. Say on.

Samuel. Though thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel ? And the Lord anointed thee king over Israel ; and the Lord sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed. Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst that which was evil in the sight of the Lord ?

Saul. Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the devoted things, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal.

Samuel. Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord ? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity

and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

Saul. I have sinned : for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy words : because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice. Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord.

Samuel. I will not return with thee : for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.

[Samuel turns to go away. Saul lays hold of the skirt of his robe, and tears it.]

Samuel. The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou. And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent : for he is not a man, that he should repent.

Saul. I have sinned : yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord thy God. *[Saul goes out.]*

Samuel. Bring me hither Agag, the king of the Amalekites. *[Agag is brought in bound.]*

Samuel. As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women.

Reader. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal. And Samuel went to Ramah ; and Saul went up to his house to Gibeah of Saul. And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death ; nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul : and the Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.

SCENE VI. *David and Goliath*

The camps of the Philistines and the Israelites are facing each other on the left and right of the stage

respectively. In the middle is a valley. In the camp of the Philistines all is bustle and activity, but there is a strange quiet lurking over the Israelites. It is as though they are gloomily awaiting some disastrous happening. You understand the reason for this when you see a giant figure make its way from the camp on the left and haughtily descend to the valley in between, preceded by a shield-bearer. It is Goliath.

Reader. And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. He had a helmet of brass upon his head, and he was clad with a coat of mail ; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass. He had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders. The staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam ; and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron : and his shield-bearer went before him. And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel.

Goliath. Why are ye come out to set your battle in array ? Am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul ? Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and kill me, then will we be your servants : but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us. I defy the armies of Israel this day ; give me a man, that we may fight together.

Slowly and proudly, Goliath returns. There is dismay and consternation in the camp of the Israelites. David enters on the right, and goes up to his brothers. He sits down among them, and opens the basket which he has brought.

David. My father said unto me, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn, and these ten loaves, and carry them quickly to the camp to thy

brethren : and bring these ten cheeses unto the captain of their thousand, and look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge. And here am I come. How fare ye, my brethren ? And why is this dismay in our camp ?

First Brother. Goliath, the champion of the Philistines, hath again delivered his challenge, and we have no man to meet him.

David. Is there none in all our camp to match him ?

First Brother. Thou shalt see and judge for thyself, boy, for here he cometh.

[Goliath again comes in the centre, between the two camps, and issues his challenge.]

Goliath. Why are ye come out to set your battle in array ? Am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul ? Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and kill me, then will we be your servants : but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us. I defy the armies of Israel this day ; give me a man, that we may fight together.

[A soldier comes up to the brothers.]

Soldier. Have ye seen this man that is come up ? Surely to defy Israel is he come up : and it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel.

David. Shall this indeed be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh the reproach away from Israel ? For who is this Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God ?

Soldier. So shall it be done to the man that killeth him.

Second Brother. Why art thou come down ? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness ? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart ; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.

David. What have I now done? Is there not a cause?

[*The soldier goes up to Saul, who is sitting apart, brooding.*]

Soldier. Behold, O king, yonder youth who hath brought provisions for his brothers from his father Jesse asketh, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach of Israel? for who is this Philistine, that he should defy the armies of God?

Saul. Bring him before me.

[*David is brought before Saul, he kneels, and then stands erect.*]

Saul. Is it true what this man sayeth of thee?

David. It is true, O Saul. Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.

Saul. Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.

David. Thy servant kept his father's sheep; and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by the beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.

Saul. Go, and the Lord shall be with thee. Ho there!

[*Saul's attendants come before him.*]

Saul. Let this youth be armed, and put upon him mine own armour. Put an helmet of brass upon his head, and gird him with a coat of mail.

Reader. And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he essayed to go; for he had not proved it.

[*David takes off the armour and lays it at Saul's feet.*

David. I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them.

Reader. And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip. And his sling was in his hand.

[*Having made these preparations, David sits down to await the next challenge of Goliath. There is a pause. All is quiet in the camp of the Israelites. Some of the soldiers look at David in awe, some mockingly, as if at a madman. Goliath approaches, preceded as usual by his shield-bearer.*

Goliath. Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? Am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us. I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together.

[*Having issued the challenge, he gazes haughtily round, and is preparing to return, when he notices David coming to meet him. He stares in amazement at the unarmed stripling. He can hardly believe his eyes. David does not flinch before his stare.*

Goliath. Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? The curse of all the gods be on thee.

[*Seeing at last that David is really determined to fight, he takes the shield from his shield-bearer, and prepares to have done with so ignominious a contest as soon as possible.*

Goliath. Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.

David. Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the

Lord deliver thee into mine hand ; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee, and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth ; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel : and all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear : for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hand.

[They fight. There is dead silence in both camps while the battle is in progress.]

Reader. And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead ; and the stone sank into his forehead ; and he fell upon his face to the earth.

[A gasp of joy goes up from the Israelites at David's triumph, and a wail from the Philistines.]

Reader. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling, and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him ; but there was no sword in the hand of David. Then David ran, and stood over the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem ; but he put his armour in his tent.

[David retires. Saul calls Abner, his captain, to him.]

Saul. Whose son is this youth ?

Abner. As thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell.

Saul. Inquire thou whose son the stripling is.

[Abner goes out and fetches David in. He is still hot from the fight. He prostrates himself before the king.]

Saul. Whose son art thou, thou young man ?

David. I am the son of thy servant Jesse, the Beth-lehemite.

SCENE VII. *The Jealousy of Saul*

The scene is the banquetting chamber of Saul's palace. Running along the back of the stage is a large table. There is a chair on a dais on the left, and a long window on the right. Saul is sitting on the chair, and Jonathan is looking idly out of the window. Suddenly there is a stir outside, and through the window come the voices of women singing.

Women. Saul hath slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands.
Saul hath slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands.

[Saul looks up angrily. The singing fades away in the distance.]

Saul. They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands : what can he have more but the kingdom ? Jonathan, my son, conspire his death, for he supplanteth me in the hearts of my people.

Jonathan does not say anything, but waits until Saul has gone out, and then beckons through the window to David. David enters.

Jonathan. Saul my father seeketh to slay thee : now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself in the morning, and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself : and I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where thou art, and I will commune with my father of thee ; and if I see aught, I will tell thee. For I said unto him, Let not the king sin against his servant, against David ; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have been to thee ward very good : for he put his life in his hand, and smote the Philistine, and the Lord wrought a great victory for all Israel : thou sawest it, and didst

rejoice : wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause ?

Saul re-enters and sits on his chair.

Reader. And an evil spirit from the Lord was upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand ; and David played on his harp.

David. I love thee, O Lord, my strength.
The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer ;
My God, my strong rock, in him will I trust ;
My shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower.

I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised :
So shall I be saved from mine enemies.

The cords of death compassed me,
And the floods of ungodliness made me afraid.

The cords of Sheol were round about me :

The snares of death came upon me.

In my distress I called upon the Lord,

And cried unto my God :

He heard my voice out of his temple,

And my cry before him came into his ears.

Then the earth shook and trembled,

The foundations also of the mountains moved

And were shaken, because he was wroth.

There went up a smoke out of his nostrils,

And fire out of his mouth devoured :

Coals were kindled by it.

He bowed the heavens also, and came down ;

And thick darkness was under his feet.

And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly :

Yea, he flew swiftly upon the wings of the wind.

He made darkness his hiding-place, his pavilion round about him ;

Darkness of waters, thick clouds of the skies.

At the brightness before him his thick clouds passed,
Hailstones and coals of fire.

The Lord also thundered in the heavens,
And the Most High uttered his voice ;
Hailstones and coals of fire.
And he sent out his arrows, and scattered them ;
Yea, lightnings manifold, and discomfited them.
Then the channels of waters appeared,
And the foundations of the world were laid bare,
At thy rebuke, O Lord,
At the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.
He sent from on high, he took me ;
He drew me out of many waters.
He delivered me from my strong enemy,
And from them that hated me, for they were too
mighty for me.
They came upon me in the day of my calamity :
But the Lord was my stay.
He brought me forth also into a large place ;
He delivered me, because he delighted in me.
The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness ;
According to the cleanness of my hands hath he re-
compensed me.
For I have kept the ways of the Lord,
And have not wickedly departed from my God.
[*Saul, who all the time has been toying with his spear,
suddenly starts up and hurls it at David. David
moves quickly to one side, and sings afresh.*
David. Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful
unto me ;
For my soul taketh refuge in thee :
Yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I take refuge,
Until these calamities be overpast.
I will cry unto God Most High ;
Unto God that performeth all things for me.
He shall send from heaven, and save me,
When he that would swallow me up reproacheth ;
God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.
My soul is among lions ;

I lie among them that are set on fire,
Even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and
arrows,
And their tongue a sharp sword.
Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens ;
Let thy glory be above all the earth.
They have prepared a net for my steps ;
My soul is bowed down :
They have digged a pit before me ;
They are fallen into the midst thereof themselves.
My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed :
I will sing, yea, I will sing praises.
Awake up, my glory ; awake, psaltery and harp :
I myself will awake right early.
I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the
peoples :
I will sing praises unto thee among the nations.
For thy mercy is great unto the heavens,
And thy truth unto the skies.
Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens ;
Let thy glory be above all the earth.

Again Saul hurls his spear. David seizes the harp, and seeks safety in flight. Saul stalks up and down the room and then goes out. Jonathan enters. After an interval there is a tapping sound near the window. Jonathan goes up to the window, beckons, and David enters on the right.

David. What have I done ? What is mine iniquity ? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life ?

Jonathan. God forbid ; thou shalt not die : behold, my father doeth nothing either great or small, but that he discloseth it unto me : and why should my father hide this thing from me ? It is not so.

David. Thy father knoweth well that I have found grace in thine eyes ; and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved : but truly as the Lord

liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death.

Jonathan. Whatsoever thy soul desireth, I will even do it for thee.

David. Behold, to-morrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat : but let me go, that I may hide myself in the field unto the third day at even. If thy father miss me at all, then say, David earnestly asked leave of me that he might run to Beth-lehem his city : for it is the yearly sacrifice there for all the family. If he say thus, It is well ; thy servant shall have peace : but if he be wroth, then know that evil is determined by him. Therefore deal kindly with thy servant ; for thou hast brought thy servant into a covenant of the Lord with thee : but if there be in me iniquity, slay me thyself ; for why shouldst thou bring me to thy father ?

Jonathan. Far be it from thee : for if I should at all know that evil were determined by my father to come upon thee, then would not I tell it to thee ?

David. Who shall tell me if perchance thy father answer thee roughly ?

Jonathan. The Lord, the God of Israel, be witness ; when I have sounded my father about this time to-morrow, or the third day, behold, if there be good toward David, shall I not then send unto thee, and disclose it unto thee ? The Lord do so to Jonathan, and more also, should it please my father to do thee evil, if I disclose it not unto thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace : and the Lord be with thee, as he hath been with my father. And thou shalt not only while yet I live show me the kindness of the Lord, that I die not : but also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever : no, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth. To-morrow is the new moon : and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty. And when thou hast stayed three

days, thou shalt go down quickly, and come to the place where thou didst hide thyself when the business was in hand, and shalt remain by the stone Ezel. And I will shoot three arrows on the side thereof, as though I shot at a mark. And, behold, I will send the lad, saying, Go, find the arrows. If I say unto the lad, Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee : take them, and come ; for there is peace to thee and no hurt, as the Lord liveth. But if I say thus unto the boy, Behold, the arrows are beyond thee : go thy way ; for the Lord hath sent thee away. And as touching the matter which thou and I have spoken of, behold, the Lord is between me and thee for ever.

[*They go out.*

There is an interval. The feast of the new moon approaches. Saul and his company enter and take their places at the table. There is an empty place.

Saul. Wherefore cometh not the son of Jesse to meat ?

Jonathan. David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Beth-lehem : and he said, Let me go, I pray thee ; for our family hath a sacrifice in the city ; and my brother, he hath commanded me to be there : and now, if I have found favour in thine eyes, let me get away, I pray thee, and see my brethren. Therefore he is not come unto the king's table.

Saul. Thou son of a perverse rebellious woman, do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own shame ? For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom. Wherefore now send and fetch him unto me, for he shall surely die.

Jonathan. Wherefore should he be put to death ? what hath he done ?

Reader. And Saul cast his spear at him to smite him : whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to put David to death. So Jonathan arose

from the table in fierce anger, and did eat no meat the second day of the month : for he was grieved for David, because his father had done him shame.

[The feast breaks up in confusion. Jonathan is left alone, and taking his bow and arrows speaks through the window.]

Jonathan. Run, lad, find now the arrows which I shoot. *[He shoots.]*

Jonathan. Is not the arrow beyond thee? Make speed, haste, stay not.

There is a pause. David enters on right.

Jonathan. Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord shall be between me and thee, and between thy seed and my seed, for ever.

SCENE VIII. *How David spared Saul*

Saul is asleep in a cave in the wilderness. David and his companions are concealed near by.

Reader. And it came to pass, when Saul was returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi. Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats. And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where was a cave ; and Saul went in to cover his feet. Now David and his men were abiding in the innermost parts of the cave.

First Man. Behold, the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, and thou shalt do to him as it shall seem good unto thee.

[David goes over on tiptoe to where Saul is asleep and

quietly cuts a piece from the hem of his robe. He retires to his friends.

Reader. And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.

David. The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my lord, the Lord's anointed, to put forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the Lord's anointed.

[Saul arises and prepares to move on. He has not noticed David.]

David. My lord, the king.

[Saul turns in astonishment, and David prostrates himself to the ground.]

David. Wherefore hearkenest thou to men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt? Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the Lord had delivered thee to-day into mine hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the Lord's anointed. Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee, though thou huntest after my soul to take it. The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee. As saith the proverb of the ancients, Out of the wicked cometh forth wickedness: but mine hand shall not be upon thee. After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom doth he pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea. The Lord therefore be judge, and give sentence between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand.

Saul. Is this thy voice, my son David? *[He is stricken with compassion, and weeps.]* Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rendered unto me good, whereas I have rendered unto thee evil.

And thou hast declared this day how that thou hast dealt well with me : forasmuch as when the Lord had delivered me up into thine hand, thou killedst me not. For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away ? Wherefore the Lord reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day. And now, behold, I know that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand. Swear now therefore unto me by the Lord, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house.

David. I swear by the living God that I will not cut off thy seed after thee, and that I will not destroy thy name out of thy father's house.

Reader. And Saul went home ; but David and his men gat them up unto the hold.

[There is a short interval. Saul is discovered armed, lying asleep with his captain Abner. David and his two companions are a little way off.]

Reader. And David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched : and David beheld the place where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner, the captain of his host : and Saul lay within the place of the wagons, and the people pitched round about him.

David. Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp ?

Abishai. I will go down with thee.

[They approach Saul very quietly.]

Reader. So David and Abishai came to the people by night : and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the place of the wagons, with his spear stuck in the ground at his head : and Abner and the people lay round about him.

Abishai. God hath delivered up thine enemy into thine hand this day : now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear to the earth at one stroke, and I will not smite him the second time.

David. Destroy him not : for who can put forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless ? As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him ; or his day shall come to die ; or he shall go down into battle, and perish. The Lord forbid that I should put forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed : but now take, I pray thee, the spear that is at his head, and the cruse of water, and let us go.

[David moves a little way off.]

David. Answerest thou not, Abner ?

Abner. Who art thou that criest to the king ?

David. Art not thou a valiant man ? And who is like to thee in Israel ? And wherefore then hast thou not kept watch over thy lord the king ? This thing is not good that thou hast done. As the Lord liveth, ye are worthy to die, because ye have not kept watch over your lord, the Lord's anointed. And now, see, where the king's spear is, and the cruse of water that was at his head.

[Saul has awakened. He stands, and seeing David in the distance, he recognizes him.]

Saul. Is this thy voice, my son David ?

David. It is my voice, my lord, O king. Wherefore doth my lord pursue after his servant ? For what have I done ? or what evil is in mine hand ? Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If it be the Lord that hath stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering : but if it be the children of men, cursed be they before the Lord ; for they have driven me out this day that I should not cleave unto the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Go, serve other gods. Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth away from the presence of the Lord : for the king of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains.

Saul. I have sinned : return, my son David : for I will no more do thee harm, because my life was

precious in thine eyes this day : behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.

David. Behold the spear, O king ! let then one of the young men come over and fetch it. And the Lord shall render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness : forasmuch as the Lord delivered thee into my hand this day, and I would not put forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed. And, behold, as thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be much set by in the eyes of the Lord, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation.

Saul. Blessed be thou, my son David : thou shalt both do mightily, and shalt surely prevail.

Reader. So David went his way, and Saul returned to his place.

SCENE IX. *The Witch of Endor*

Reader. And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in Shunem : and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in Gilboa. And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.

In a deep, gloomy cave sits the witch, brooding over the embers of a dying fire. Footsteps are heard outside. She starts up and crouches in a corner. Saul enters with two companions in disguise.

Saul. Divine unto me, I pray thee, by the familiar spirit, and bring me up whomsoever I shall name unto thee.

Witch. Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits,

and the wizards, out of the land : wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die ?

Saul. As the Lord liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing.

Witch. Whom shall I bring up unto thee ?

Saul. Bring me up Samuel.

[The witch throws strange herbs on to the fire and mutters incantations. There is a pause, then with a scream she turns on Saul.]

Witch. Why hast thou deceived me ? for thou art Saul.

Saul. Be not afraid : for what seest thou ?

Witch. I see a god coming up out of the earth.

Saul. What form is he of ?

Witch. An old man cometh up ; and he is covered with a robe.

[Saul realizes that this is indeed Samuel. He bows low to the ground. The voice of Samuel speaks from behind the stage.]

Samuel. Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up ?

Saul. I am sore distressed ; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams : therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.

Samuel. Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine adversary ? And the Lord hath wrought for himself, as he spake by me : and the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, even to David. Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord, and didst not execute his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee this day. Moreover the Lord will deliver Israel also with thee into the hands of the Philistines : and to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be

with me : the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.

Reader. Then Saul fell straightway his full length upon the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel : and there was no strength in him ; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night. And the woman came unto Saul, and saw that he was sore troubled.

Witch. Behold, thine handmaid hath hearkened unto thy voice, and I have put my life in my hand, and have hearkened unto thy words which thou spakest unto me. Now therefore, I pray thee, hearken thou also unto the voice of thine handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before thee ; and eat, that thou mayest have strength, when thou goest on thy way.

Saul. Nay, I will not eat.

Reader. But his servants, together with the woman, constrained him ; and he hearkened unto their voice. So he arose from the earth, and sat upon the bed. And the woman had a fatted calf in the house ; and she hasted and killed it ; and she took flour, and kneaded it, and did bake unleavened bread thereof : and she brought it before Saul, and before his servants ; and they did eat. Then they rose up, and went away that night.

EPILOGUE

Reader. Now the Philistines fought against Israel : and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa. And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons ; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchishua, the sons of Saul. And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him ; and he was

greatly distressed by reason of the archers. Then said Saul to his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these Philistines come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took his sword, and fell upon it. And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he likewise fell upon his sword, and died with him. So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armour-bearer, and all his men, that same day together.

David is resting at the door of his tent after the slaughter of the Amalekites. A man staggers in with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head. He falls at the feet of David, and makes obeisance to him.

David. From whence comest thou?

Man. Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped.

David. How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me.

Man. The people are fled from the battle, and many also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also.

David. How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead?

Man. As I happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, Here am I. And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an Amalekite. And he said unto me, Stand, I pray thee, beside me, and slay me, for anguish hath taken hold of me; because my life is yet whole in me. So I stood beside him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord.

[He holds out the pitiful relics. David hides his head.]

He is overcome with grief. He rends his clothes. He looks up, and addresses the young man once more.

David. Whence art thou ?

Man. I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite.

David. How wast thou not afraid to put forth thy hand to destroy the Lord's anointed ?

[David beckons to one of his soldiers.]

David. Go near, and fall upon him.

[The soldier draws his sword, and drives the man off the stage. There is a cry outside, as the Amalekite is slain. David looks off the stage upon his dead body.]

David. Thy blood be upon thy head ; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the Lord's anointed.

Reader. And David lamented over Jonathan and Saul.

David. Thy glory, O Israel, is slain upon thy high places !

How are the mighty fallen !

Tell it not in Gath,

Publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon ;

Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,

Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.

Ye mountains of Gilboa,

Let there be no dew nor rain upon you, neither fields
of offerings :

For there the shield of the mighty was vilely cast away,

The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.

From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the
mighty,

The bow of Jonathan turned not back,

And the sword of Saul returned not empty.

Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their
lives,

And in their death they were not divided ;

They were swifter than eagles,

They were stronger than lions.
Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
Who clothed you in scarlet delicately,
Who put ornaments of gold upon your apparel.
How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle !
Jonathan is slain upon thy high places.
I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan :
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me :
Thy love to me was wonderful,
Passing the love of women.
How are the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished !

THE TWO PROPHETS

THE PLAYERS

ELIJAH, *the prophet.*

ELISHA, *the successor of Elijah.*

AHAB, *King of Egypt.*

OBADIAH.

GEHAZI, *the servant of Elisha.*

NAAMAN, *the leper, captain of the host of Syria.*

Followers of Naaman.

A Widow.

The Widow's Son.

The Priests of Baal.

The King.

Messenger.

THE TWO PROPHETS

SCENE I. *Elijah and the Widow*

Reader. And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the Lord, the God of Israel, liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word. And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook ; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. So he went and did according unto the word of the Lord : for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening ; and he drank of the brook. And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land. And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there : behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. So he rose and went to Zarephath ; and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow woman was there gathering sticks : and he called to her.

The woman is busy gathering sticks, when Elijah, limping wearily, enters.

Elijah. Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a

vessel, that I may drink. Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.

Widow. As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in the barrel, and a little oil in the cruse : and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

Elijah. Fear not ; go and do as thou hast said : but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it forth unto me, and afterward make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.

Reader. And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah : and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. The barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah. And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick ; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him.

Widow. What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God ? thou art come unto me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son !

Elijah. Give me thy son.

[*Elijah takes the child, and lays him down. He kneels by his side and prays.*

Elijah. O Lord my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son ?

[*He stretches his body over the child's body and cries aloud to God.*

Elijah. O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again.

[*The child's eyelids flutter, he moans, and rises slowly.*

Reader. And the Lord hearkened unto the voice of Elijah ; and the soul of the child came into him again,

and he revived. And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother.

Elijah. See, thy son liveth.

Widow. Now I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is true.

SCENE II. *The Priests of Baal*

Elijah is sitting alone, when the Voice of God comes to him.

Voice of God. Go, show thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth.

Reader. And Elijah went to show himself unto Ahab. And the famine was sore in Samaria.

Obadiah enters.

Reader. And Ahab called Obadiah, which was over the household. Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly: for it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.

Obadiah. Is it thou, my lord Elijah?

Elijah. It is I: go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here.

Obadiah. Wherein have I sinned, that thou wouldst deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me? As the Lord thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, He is not here, he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not. And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here. And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the spirit of the Lord shall

carry thee whither I know not ; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me : but I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth. Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the Lord, how I hid an hundred men of the Lord's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water ? And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here : and he shall slay me.

Elijah. As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself unto him to-day.

As Obadiah is preparing to go, Ahab enters. He recognizes Elijah and goes up to him.

Ahab. Art thou he that troubleth Israel ?

Elijah. I have not troubled Israel ; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed the Baalim. Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of Asherah four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.

Ahab. Go, Obadiah, gather me together the priests of Baal and all Israel.

Obadiah goes out, and after a short pause, priests and people enter. They group themselves, priests in front, behind Ahab. Elijah is in right centre of the stage.

Elijah. How long halt ye between two opinions ? if the Lord be God, follow him : but if Baal, then follow him.

[There is a dead silence. The priests move restlessly.]

Elijah. I, even I only, am left a prophet of the Lord ; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks ; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, and put no fire under :

and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on the wood, and put no fire under. And call ye on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God.

People. It is well spoken.

Elijah. Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire under.

Reader. And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon.

Priests. O Baal, hear us, O Baal, hear us.

Elijah. Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is musing, or he is gone aside, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awakened.

Reader. And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lances, till the blood gushed out upon them. And it was so, when midday was past, that they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening oblation; but there was neither voice, nor any to answer, not any that regarded.

Elijah. Come near unto me. [*The people approach.*]

Reader. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was thrown down. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name. And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord; and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid it on the wood.

Elijah. Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt offering, and on the wood.

[*They empty the water on the altar.*]

Elijah. Do it the second time.

[*They do it a second time.*]

Elijah. Do it the third time.

[They do it a third time.]

Reader. And the water ran round about the altar ; and he filled the trench also with water.

Elijah. O Lord, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou, Lord, art God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.

Reader. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces.

[The people fall on their faces.]

People. The Lord, he is God ; the Lord, he is God.

Elijah. Take the prophets of Baal ; let not one of them escape.

SCENE III. *Naaman, the Leper*

On the left of the stage is Elisha, sitting at the door of his house. The king of Israel enters, and is walking across the stage when a messenger rushes in, and prostrates himself at the king's feet.

King. Where art thou from, and what wouldst thou ?

Messenger. From Syria, great king. I bear thee a message from my master.

[He hands a letter to the king.]

King. What desireth my brother, the king of Syria ?

Messenger. O lord, hearken and I will tell thee. Naaman, the captain of the host of the king of Syria, a great man, and honourable, for the Lord hath given victories unto Syria by him, is sore afflicted. He is a leper.

King. Well, and what has this to do with me ?

Messenger. Behold, the Syrians had gone out in bands, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid ; and she waited on Naaman's wife. And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria ! then would he recover him of his leprosy. And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel. And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And here I bring thee this letter, with ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment.

[The king opens the letter, and reads.]

King. When this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.

[The king of Israel throws the letter down, and rends his clothes.]

King. Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy ? Consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.

[Elisha has been an interested spectator of this scene.]

When he sees the king rend his clothes, he goes up to him.

Elisha. Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes ? Let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.

The king bows his head, and goes out. Naaman enters on the right, and Elisha retires within his house. Naaman comes and stands before the prophet's dwelling, surprised that there is nobody to greet him.

Naaman. Where is this prophet ? Go one, and tell him that Naaman stands without.

[One of his train comes forward, and knocks at the door of Elisha. A servant appears.]

Follower. Is this the house of the prophet of Israel ?

Servant. It is.

Follower. Go, tell thy master that Naaman, the captain of the host of the king of Syria, attends without.
[*The servant goes in, and immediately returns. Naaman is amazed that the Israelite should not have come in person.*]

Follower. Well, what saith thy master ?

Servant. My master sends these words to Naaman the leper, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.

[*Naaman turns away in anger.*]

Naaman. Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel ? May I not wash in them, and be clean ?

Follower. My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it ? How much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean ?

[*Naaman looks upon him in silence for a few moments, and then goes out without a word.*]

Reader. Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God : and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

Naaman enters once more. His face shows his great joy. Elisha comes forth to meet him.

Naaman. Behold now, I know there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel : now therefore, I pray thee, take a present of thy servant.

Elisha. As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none.

Naaman. Nay, but thou shalt take a present.

Elisha. I have said. I will receive none.

Naaman. If not, yet I pray thee let there be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth ; for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the Lord. In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant ; when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing.
[*Elisha bids him farewell, and then retires into his house.*

Naaman with his train prepares to return, and moves slowly across the stage to the right. Gehazi stands looking after him, hesitating.

Gehazi [aside]. Behold, my master hath spared this Naaman the Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought ; as the Lord liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him.

[*He runs after Naaman, who turns back anxiously.*

Naaman. Is all well ?

Gehazi. All is well. My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from the hill country of Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets ; give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of raiment.

Naaman. Be content, take two talents.

[*Gehazi takes the two talents, hides them, and comes slowly back. As he approaches the house, Elisha comes out to meet him.*

Elisha. Whence comest thou, Gehazi ?

Gehazi. Thy servant went no whither.

Elisha. Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee ? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and men-servants and maid-servants ? The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever.

Reader. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.

JOB THE PATIENT

THE PLAYERS

GOD.

SATAN.

JOB.

The Wife of Job.

ELIPHAZ.

BILDAD.

ZOPHAR.

ELIHU.

Four Messengers.

JOB THE PATIENT

God and Satan are in the centre of the stage, in front of the curtain

God. Whence comest thou ?

Satan. From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

God. Hast thou considered my servant Job ? for there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil.

Satan. Doth Job fear God for nought ? Hast thou not made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath, on every side ? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will renounce thee to thy face.

God. Behold, all that he hath is in thy power ; only upon himself put not forth thine hand.

[*God and Satan separate, going respectively to the right and to the left of the stage. They stand there still and silent, watching the trial of Job. The curtain rises. Job is alone. He is a placid, elderly man, dignified and happy, as indeed he should be, for his wealth is very considerable. He owns seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses. He has also seven sons, and three daughters. His quiet is disturbed by a messenger, who rushes in, and casts himself at Job's feet, wailing.*

Job. Speak, man, what is it ?

Messenger. The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them : and the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away ; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword ; I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

He has hardly finished speaking when another messenger enters.

Messenger. The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burnt up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them ; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

A third messenger enters.

Messenger. The Chaldeans made three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have taken them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword ; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

A fourth messenger enters.

Messenger. Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house : and, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead ; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

[*Job rises. He has borne the recital of the wiping out of all his wealth with a quiet calm, but the last terrible tragedy is almost too much, even for him. He rends his mantle, and falls to the ground, and then with a mighty effort regains control of himself.*

Job. Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither : the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord,

[*He is still on his knees when the curtain falls. The spectators come from the side of the stage to the centre.*

God. From whence comest thou ?

Satan. From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

God. Hast thou considered my servant Job ? for there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil : and he still holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

Satan. Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will denounce thee to thy face.

God. Behold, he is in thine hand ; only spare his life.
[Each resumes his former position.]

Reader. So Satan smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal ; and he sat among the ashes.

[The curtain rises. Job is sitting in the middle of the stage. You would hardly know that he was the same man, his face is so wrung with agony. Yet there is a certain calmness and resignation in his manner. His wife is beside him.]

Wife. Dost thou still hold fast thine integrity ? renounce God, and die.

Job. Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What ? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil ?

[His wife looks off the stage.]

Wife. Behold, here come thy three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, to mourn with thee.

The three men enter, and sit in silence by Job.

Job's wife goes out.

Job. Let the day perish wherein I was born,
 Let that day be darkness ;
 Let not God regard it from above,

Neither let the light shine upon it.
Let them curse it that curse the day,
Who are ready to rouse up leviathan.
Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark :
Let it look for light, but have none ;
Neither let it behold the eyelids of the morning :
Why died I not from the womb ?
For now should I have lien down and been quiet ;
I should have slept ; then had I been at rest :
With kings and counsellors of the earth,
Which built up waste places for themselves ;
Or with princes that had gold,
Who filled their houses with silver.
There the wicked cease from troubling ;
And there the weary be at rest.
There the prisoners are at ease together ;
They hear not the voice of the taskmaster.
The small and great are there ;
And the servant is free from his master.
Wherefore is life given to him that is in misery,
And life unto the bitter in soul ;
Which long for death, but it cometh not ?
Why is light given to a man whose way is hid,
And whom God hath hedged in ?
For my sighing cometh before I eat,
And my roarings are poured out like water.
For the thing which I fear cometh upon me,
And that which I am afraid of cometh unto me.
I am not at ease, neither am I quiet, neither have I
rest ;
But trouble cometh.

Eliphaz. If one essay to commune with thee, wilt
thou be grieved ?

But who can withhold himself from speaking ?
Behold, thou hast instructed many,
And thou hast strengthened the weak hands.
Thy words have upholden him that was falling,
And thou hast confirmed the feeble knees.

But now it is come unto thee, and thou faintest ;
It toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.
Remember, I pray thee, whoever perished, being
innocent ?

Or where were the upright cut off ?
According as I have seen, they that plow iniquity,
And sow trouble, reap the same.
By the breath of God they perish,
And by the blast of his anger are they consumed.
Shall mortal man be more just than God ?
Shall a man be more pure than his Maker ?
Behold, he putteth no trust in his servants ;
And his angels he chargeth with folly :
How much more them that dwell in houses of clay,
Whose foundation is in the dust,
Which are crushed before the moth !
For affliction cometh not forth of the dust,
Neither doth trouble spring out of the ground ;
But man is born unto trouble,
As the sparks fly upward.

But as for me, I would seek unto God,
And unto God would I commit my cause :
Which doeth great things and unsearchable ;
Marvellous things without number :
Who giveth rain upon the earth,
And sendeth waters upon the fields :
So that he setteth up on high those that be low ;
And those which mourn are exalted to safety.
Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth :
Therefore despise not thou the chastening of the
Almighty.

For he maketh sore, and bindeth up ;
He woundeth, and his hands make whole.

Job. Oh that my vexation were but weighed,
And my calamity laid in the balances together !
Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass ?
Or loweth the ox over his fodder ?
Is my strength the strength of stones ?

Or is my flesh of brass ?

Is it not that I have no help in me,

And that effectual working is driven quite from me ?

[He gazes on his friends reproachfully.]

To him that is ready to faint kindness should be
showed from his friend ;

Even to him that forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.

My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook,

As the channel of brooks that pass away ;

Which are black by reason of the ice,

And wherein the snow hideth itself :

What time they wax warm, they vanish :

When it is hot, they are consumed out of their
place.

The caravans that travel by the way of them turn
aside ;

They go up into the waste, and perish.

Did I say, Give unto me ?

Or, Offer a present for me of your substance ?

Or, Deliver me from the adversary's hand ?

Or, Redeem me from the hand of the oppressors ?

Teach me, and I will hold my peace :

And cause me to understand wherein I have erred.

How forcible are words of uprightness !

But what doth your arguing reprove ?

Do ye imagine to reprove words ?

Seeing that the speeches of one that is desperate are
as wind.

Yea, ye would cast lots upon the fatherless,

And make merchandise of your friend.

Now therefore be pleased to look upon me :

For surely I shall not lie to your face.

Return, I pray you, let there be no injustice ;

Yea, return again, my cause is righteous.

Is there injustice on my tongue ?

Cannot my taste discern mischievous things ?

When I lie down, I say,

When shall I arise ? but the night is long ;

And I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning
of the day.

My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust ;

My skin closeth up and breaketh out afresh.

My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle,

And are spent without hope.

Oh remember that my life is wind :

Mine eye shall no more see good.

The eye of him that seeth me shall behold me no
more :

Thine eyes shall be upon me, but I shall not be.

As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away,

So he that goeth down to Sheol shall come up no more.

He shall return no more to his house,

Neither shall his place know him any more.

Therefore I will not refrain my mouth ;

I will speak in the anguish of my spirit ;

I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.

Am I a sea, or a sea-monster,

That thou settest a watch over me ?

When I say, My bed shall comfort me,

My couch shall ease my complaint ;

Then thou scarest me with dreams,

And terrifiest me through visions :

So that my soul chooseth strangling,

And death rather than these my bones.

I loathe my life ; I would not live alway :

Let me alone ; for my days are vanity.

What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him,

And that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him,

And that thou shouldest visit him every morning,

And try him every moment ?

How long wilt thou not look away from me,

Nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle ?

If I have sinned, what do I unto thee, O thou watcher
of men ?

Why hast thou set me as a mark for thee,

So that I am a burden to myself ?

And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and
take away mine iniquity ?

For now shall I lie down in the dust ;

And thou shalt seek me diligently, but I shall not be.

Bildad. How long wilt thou speak these things ?

And how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a
mighty wind ?

Doth God pervert judgment ?

Or doth the Almighty pervert justice ?

If thy children have sinned against him,

And he have delivered them into the hand of their
transgression :

If thou wouldst seek diligently unto God,

And make thy supplication to the Almighty ;

If thou wert pure and upright ;

Surely now he would awake for thee,

And make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

And though thy beginning was small,

Yet thy latter end should greatly increase.

For inquire, I pray thee, of the former age,

And apply thyself to that which their fathers have
searched out :

Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee,

And utter words out of their heart ?

Can the rush grow up without mire ?

Can the flag grow without water ?

Whilst it is yet in its greenness, and not cut down,
It withereth before any other herb.

So are the paths of all that forget God ;

And the hope of the godless man shall perish :

Whose confidence shall break in sunder,

And whose trust is a spider's web.

He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand :

He shall hold fast thereby, but it shall not endure.

Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man,

Neither will he uphold the evildoers.

He will yet fill thy mouth with laughter,

And thy lips with shouting.

They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame ;

And the tent of the wicked shall be no more.

Job. Of a truth I know that it is so :

But how can man be just with God ?

If he be pleased to contend with him,

He cannot answer him one of a thousand.

He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength :

Who hath hardened himself against him, and prospered ?

Which removeth the mountains, and they know it not,
When he overturneth them in his anger.

Which shaketh the earth out of her place,

And the pillars thereof tremble.

Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not ;

And sealeth up the stars.

Which alone stretcheth out the heavens,

And treadeth upon the waves of the sea.

Which maketh the Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades,

And the chambers of the south.

Which doeth great things past finding out ;

Yea, marvellous things without number.

Lo, he goeth by me, and I see him not :

For he breaketh me with a tempest,

And multiplieth my wounds without cause.

He will not suffer me to take my breath,

But filleth me with bitterness.

If we speak of the strength of the mighty, lo, he is there !

And if of judgment, who will appoint me a time ?

Though I be righteous, mine own mouth shall condemn me :

Though I be perfect, it shall prove me perverse.

I am perfect ; I regard not myself ; I despise my life.

It is all one ; therefore I say,

He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.

If the scourge slay suddenly,

He will mock at the trial of the innocent.

The earth is given into the hand of the wicked :
He covereth the faces of the judges thereof ;
If it be not he, who then is it ?
Now my days are swifter than a runner :
They flee away, they see no good.
They are passed away as the swift ships :
As the eagle that swoopeth on the prey.
If I say, I will forget my complaint,
I will put off my sad countenance, and be of good
cheer :
I am afraid of all my sorrows,
I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.
I shall be condemned ;
Why then do I labour in vain ?
If I wash myself with snow water,
And make my hands never so clean ;
Yet wilt thou plunge me in the ditch,
And mine own clothes shall abhor me.
For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him,
That we should come together in judgment.
There is no umpire betwixt us,
That might lay his hand upon us both.
Let him take his rod away from me,
And let not his terror make me afraid :
Then would I speak, and not fear him ;
For I am not so in myself.
My soul is weary of my life ;
I will give free course to my complaint ;
I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.
I will say unto God, Do not condemn me ;
Show me wherefore thou contendest with me.
If I be wicked, woe unto me ;
And if I be righteous, yet shall I not lift up my head ;
Being filled with ignominy
And looking upon mine affliction.
And if my head exalt itself, thou huntest me as a lion :
And again thou showest thyself marvellous upon me.
Thou renewest thy witnesses against me,

And increasest thine indignation upon me ;
Changes and warfare are with me.
Are not my days few ? Cease then,
And let me alone, that I may take comfort a little,
Before I go whence I shall not return,
Even to the land of darkness and of the shadow of
death ;

A land of thick darkness, as darkness itself ;
A land of the shadow of death, without any order,
And where the light is as darkness.

Zophar. Should not the multitude of words be
answered ?

And should a man full of talk be justified ?
Should thy boastings make men hold their peace ?
And when thou mockest, shall no man make thee
ashamed ?

For thou sayest, My doctrine is pure,
And I am clean in thine eyes.
But Oh that God would speak,
And open his lips against thee ;
And that he would show thee the secrets of wisdom,
That it is manifold in effectual working !
Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than
thine iniquity deserveth.

Canst thou by searching find out God ?
Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection ?
It is high as heaven ; what canst thou do ?
Deeper than Sheol ; what canst thou know ?
The measure thereof is longer than the earth,
And broader than the sea.
If he pass through, and shut up,
And call unto judgment, then who can hinder him ?
For he knoweth vain men :
He seeth iniquity also, even though he consider it not.
But vain man is void of understanding,
Yea, man is born as a wild ass's colt.
If thou set thine heart aright,
And stretch out thine hands toward him ;

If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away,
And let not unrighteousness dwell in thy tents ;
Surely then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot ;
Yea, thou shalt be steadfast, and shalt not fear :
For thou shalt forget thy misery ;
Thou shalt remember it as waters that are passed
away :

And thy life shall be clearer than the noonday ;
Though there be darkness, it shall be as the morning.
And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope ;
Yea, thou shalt search about thee, and shalt take thy
rest in safety.

Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee
afraid ;

Yea, many shall make suit unto thee.
But the eyes of the wicked shall fail,
And they shall have no way to flee,
And their hope shall be the giving up of the ghost.

Job. No doubt but ye are the people,
And wisdom shall die with you.
But I have understanding as well as you ;
I am not inferior to you :
Yea, who knoweth not such things as these ?
I am as one that is a laughing-stock to his neighbour,
A man that called upon God, and he answered him :
The just, the perfect man is a laughing-stock.
In the thought of him that is at ease there is contempt
for misfortune ;

It is ready for them whose foot slippeth.
The tents of robbers prosper,
And they that provoke God are secure ;
Into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.
But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee ;
And the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee ;
Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee ;
And the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.
Who knoweth not in all these,
That the hand of the Lord hath wrought this ?

In whose hand is the soul of every living thing,
And the breath of all mankind.

Doth not the ear try words,
Even as the palate tasteth its meat ;
With aged men is wisdom,
And in length of days understanding.

With him is wisdom and might ;
He hath counsel and understanding.
Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built
again ;

He shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.
Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up ;
Again, he sendeth them out, and they overturn the
earth.

With him is strength and effectual working ;
The deceived and the deceiver are his.

He leadeth counsellors away spoiled,
And judges maketh he fools.

Lo, mine eye hath seen all this,
Mine ear hath heard and understood it.

What ye know, the same do I know also :

I am not inferior unto you.

Surely I would speak to the Almighty,
And I desire to reason with God.

But ye are forgers of lies,

Ye are all physicians of no value.

Oh that ye would altogether hold your peace !

Hear now my reasoning,

And hearken to the pleadings of my lips.

Will ye speak unrighteously for God,

And talk deceitfully for him ?

Will ye respect his person ?

Will ye contend for God ?

Is it good that he should search you out ?

Though he slay me, yet will I wait for him :

I will maintain my ways before him.

Who is he that will contend with me ?

For now shall I hold my peace and give up the ghost.

Only do not two things unto me,
Then will I not hide myself from thy face :
Withdraw thine hand far from me ;
And let not thy terror make me afraid.
Wilt thou harass a driven leaf ?
And wilt thou pursue the dry stubble ?
Man that is born of a woman
Is of few days, and full of trouble.
He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down :
He fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.
There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will
 sprout again,
And that the tender branch thereof will not cease.
Though the root thereof wax old in the earth,
And the stock thereof die in the ground ;
Yet through the scent of water it will bud,
And put forth boughs like a plant.
But man dieth, and wasteth away :
Yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he ?
As the waters fail from the sea,
And the river decayeth and drieth up ;
So man lieth down and riseth not :
Till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake,
Nor be roused out of their sleep.

Eliphaz. Should a wise man make answer with vain
 knowledge ?
Should he reason with unprofitable talk ?
Yea, thou doest away with fear,
And restrainest devotion before God.
For thine iniquity teacheth thy mouth,
And thou chooseth the tongue of the crafty.
Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I ;
What knowest thou, that we know not ?
What understandest thou, which is not in us ?
With us are both the gray-headed and the very aged
 men,
Much elder than thy father.
Are the consolations of God too small for thee,

And the word that dealeth gently with thee ?
Why doth thine heart carry thee away ?
And why do thine eyes wink ?
That thou turnest thy spirit against God,
And lettest such words go out of thy mouth.
The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days,
Even the number of years that are laid up for the
oppressor.

A sound of terrors is in his ears ;
In prosperity the spoiler shall come upon him.

Job. I have heard many such things :

Miserable comforters are ye all.

I also could speak as ye do ;

If your soul were in my soul's stead,

I could join words together against you,

And shake mine head at you.

But I would strengthen you with my mouth,

And the solace of my lips should assuage your grief.

[He pauses.]

My friends scorn me :

But mine eye poureth out tears unto God ;

That he would maintain the right of a man with God,

And of a son of man with his neighbour !

For when a few years are come,

I shall go the way whence I shall not return.

My spirit is consumed, my days are extinct,

The grave is ready for me.

Surely there are mockers with me,

And mine eye abideth in their provocation.

If I have spread my couch in the darkness ;

If I have said to corruption, Thou art my father ;

To the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister ;

Where then is my hope ?

And as for my hope, who shall see it ?

It shall go down to the bars of Sheol,

When once there is rest in the dust.

Bildad. How long will ye lay snares for words ?

Consider, and afterwards we will speak.

Wherefore are we counted as beasts,
And are become unclean in your sight ?
A gin shall take the wicked by the heel,
And a snare shall lay hold on him.
Terrors shall make him afraid on every side,
And shall chase him at his heels.

Job. How long will ye vex my soul,
And break me in pieces with words ?
Know now that God hath subverted me in my cause,
And hath compassed me with his net.
He hath stripped me of my glory,
And taken the crown from my head.
His troops come on together, and cast up their way
against me,
And encamp round about my tent.
Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my
friends ;

For the hand of God hath touched me.
Oh that my words were graven in the rock for ever.
But I know that my redeemer liveth,
And that he shall stand up at the last upon the earth ;
And after my skin hath been thus destroyed,
Yet from my flesh shall I see God.

Zophar. Knowest thou not this of old time,
Since man was placed upon earth,
That the triumphing of the wicked is short,
And the joy of the godless but for a moment ?

Job. Wherefore do the wicked live,
Become old, yea, wax mighty in power ?
Their houses are safe from fear,
Neither is the rod of God upon them.
But the evil man is reserved to the day of calamity ;
He is led forth to the day of wrath.

Eliphaz. Can a man be profitable unto God ?
Surely he that is wise is profitable unto himself.
Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art
righteous ?
Thou hast sent widows away empty,

And the arms of the fatherless have been broken.
Therefore snares are round about thee.

Job. Oh that I knew where I might find him,
That I might come even to his seat !
I would order my cause before him,
And fill my mouth with arguments.
Why are times not laid up by the Almighty ?
And why do not they which know him see his days ?

Elihu, a young man who has heard of Job's trouble, comes in to offer comfort. He sees that a discussion is in progress, and sits down, leaving the older men to their arguments. He listens intently to what follows, with a look of growing impatience as he realizes the tone of the conversation.

Bildad. Dominion and fear are with him ;
He maketh peace in his high places.
Is there any number of his armies ?
And upon whom doth not his light arise ?
How then can a man be just with God ?
Behold, even the moon hath no brightness,
And the stars are not pure in his sight :
How much less man, that is a worm !

Job. How hast thou helped him that is without power !
How hast thou saved the arm that hath no strength !
The Lord stretcheth out the north over empty space,
And hangeth the earth upon nothing.
He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds ;
And the cloud is not rent under them.
He closeth in the face of his throne,
And spreadeth his cloud upon it.
He hath described a boundary upon the face of the waters,
Unto the confines of light and darkness.
The pillars of heaven tremble
And are astonished at his rebuke.
He stirreth up the sea with his power.

He putteth forth his hand upon the flinty rock ;
He overturneth the mountains by the roots.
He cutteth out channels among the rocks ;
And his eye seeth every precious thing.
He bindeth the streams that they trickle not ;
And the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light.
And where is the place of understanding ?
The deep saith, It is not in me :
And the sea saith, It is not with me.
It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir,
With the precious onyx, or the sapphire.
Neither shall the exchange thereof be vessels of fine
gold.

No mention shall be made of coral or of crystal :
Yea, the price of wisdom is above rubies.
The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it.
Oh that I were as in the months of old,
As in the days when God watched over me ;
When his lamp shined upon my head,
When the Almighty was yet with me,
And my children were about me.
I was eyes to the blind,
And feet was I to the lame,
I was a father to the needy.
But now they that are younger than I have me in
derision,

Yea, I am a byword unto them.
For he hath loosed his cord, and afflicted me,
And they have cast off the bridle before me.
Days of affliction have taken hold upon me.
In the night season my bones are pierced in me,
And the pains that gnaw me take no rest.
I am a brother to jackals,
My skin is black, and falleth from me.
Therefore is my harp turned to mourning,
And my pipe into the voice of them that weep.

Reader. Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu
against Job, because he justified himself rather than

God, and against his three friends, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.

[After this speech of Job, the three friends remain silent. Elihu waits for them to speak. When he sees that they are silent, he can no longer contain his wrath, and he rises angrily.]

Elihu. I am young, and ye are very old ;
Wherefore I held back, and durst not show you mine
opinion.

I pray thee, Job, hear my speech.
I have heard the voice of thy words, saying,
I am clean, without transgression.
In this thou art not just,
For God is greater than man.
Why dost thou strive against him ?
For he giveth not account of any of his matters.
If thou hast anything to say, answer me.

[They all remain silent.]

Elihu. Far be it from God, that he should do
wickedness.

Wilt thou condemn him that is just and mighty ?
Sayest thou, My righteousness is more than God's ?
Behold, God is great, and we know him not ;
The number of his years is unsearchable.
Yea, can any understand the spreadings of the clouds,
The thunderings of his pavilion ?
Behold, he spreadeth his light around him ;
And he covereth the bottom of the sea.
Canst thou with him spread out the sky,
Which is strong as a molten mirror ?
Out of the north cometh golden splendour :
God hath upon him terrible majesty.
Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out ; he
is excellent in power :
And in judgment and plenteous justice he will not
afflict.
Men do therefore fear him :
He regardeth not any that are wise of heart.

[*A silence falls upon them. A low moaning is heard from the stage. It gradually grows louder, rising to a shriek. It is the whirlwind. A still voice is heard from the midst of it.*

God. Who is this that darkeneth counsel

By words without knowledge ?

Gird up now thy loins like a man.

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth ?

Who determined the measures thereof, if thou knowest ?

Or who stretched the line upon it ?

Whereupon were the foundations thereof fastened ?

Or who laid the corner-stone thereof ;

When the morning stars sang together,

And all the sons of God shouted for joy ?

Or who shut up the sea with doors,

When it brake forth,

When I made the cloud the garment thereof,

And thick darkness a swaddling-band for it ?

Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea ?

Or hast thou walked in the recesses of the deep ?

Have the gates of death been revealed unto thee ?

Or hast thou seen the gates of the shadow of death ?

Hast thou entered the treasures of the snow,

Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail,

Which I have reserved against the time of trouble,

Against the day of battle and war ?

Canst thou bind the cluster of the Pleiades,

Or loose the bands of Orion ?

Canst thou lead forth the Mazzaroth in their season ?

Or canst thou guide the Bear with her train ?

Canst thou send forth lightnings, that they may go,

And say unto thee, Here we are ?

Shall he that cavilleth contend with the Almighty ?

He that argueth with God, let him answer it.

[*The whirlwind dies away. There is complete silence for a few moments, and then Job lifts up his head, and replies in a very quiet voice.*

Job. Behold, I am of small account ; what shall I answer thee ?

[Again the roar of the whirlwind is heard, and the Voice of God comes a second time.]

God. Gird up thy loins now like a man.

Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be justified ?

Hast thou an arm like God ?

And canst thou thunder with a voice like him ?

Canst thou draw out leviathan with a fish hook ?

Or press down his tongue with a cord ?

Canst thou put a rope into his nose ?

Or pierce his jaw through with a hook ?

Will he make many supplications unto thee ?

Or will he speak soft words unto thee ?

Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons,

Or his head with fish spears ?

Who then is he that can stand before me ?

Who hath first given unto me, that I should repay him ?

Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine.

I will not keep silence concerning his limbs,

Nor his mighty strength, nor his comely proportion.

Round about his teeth is terror.

His strong scales are his pride,

Shut up together as with a close seal.

His neesings flash forth light,

And his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.

Out of his mouth go burning torches,

And sparks of fire leap forth.

Out of his nostrils a smoke goeth,

As of a seething pot and burning rushes.

His breath kindleth coals,

And a flame goeth forth from his mouth.

His heart is as firm as a stone ;

Yea, firm as the nether millstone.

When he raiseth himself up, the mighty are afraid :

By reason of consternation they are beside themselves.

He counteth iron as straw,

And brass as rotten wood.

The arrow cannot make him flee,
Clubs are counted as stubble :
He laugheth at the rushing of the javelin.
He maketh the deep to boil like a pot :
He maketh the sea like ointment.
He beholdeth everything that is high :
He is king over all the sons of pride.

Job. I know that thou canst do all things,
And that no purpose of thine can be restrained.
I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear ;
But now mine eye seeth thee,
Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent
In dust and ashes.

[*The Voice of God is now addressed to Eliphaz.*]

God. My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends : for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Now therefore, take unto you seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering ; and my servant Job shall pray for you ; for him will I accept, that I deal not with you after your folly ; for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.

Reader. So Eliphaz, and Bildad, and Zophar went, and did according as the Lord commanded them : and the Lord accepted Job. And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends : and the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning : and he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job. And after this Job lived an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations. So Job died, being old and full of days.

DANIEL THE SEER

THE PLAYERS

NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

BELSHAZZAR, *the son of Nebuchadnezzar.*

The Wife of Belshazzar.

SHADRACH.

MESHACH.

ABED-NEGO.

DARIUS, *the Persian.*

Counsellors.

Magicians.

Astrologers.

Chaldeans.

Herald.

Presidents of Darius.

DANIEL.

Slaves.

DANIEL THE SEER

SCENE I. *Daniel the Seer*

Nebuchadnezzar is sitting on his throne, surrounded by his counsellors. He is very agitated.

Nebuchadnezzar. I have dreamed dreams, and my spirit was troubled, and my sleep brake from me.

First Counsellor. O Nebuchadnezzar, call thy magicians, and astrologers, and Chaldeans, that they may interpret the king's dream.

Nebuchadnezzar. So be it. Call my magicians, and astrologers, and Chaldeans.

A messenger goes out. The magicians and astrologers and Chaldeans enter. They bow before him.

Nebuchadnezzar. I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream.

First Chaldean. O king, live for ever: tell thy servants, and we will show the interpretation.

Nebuchadnezzar. The thing is gone from me: if ye make not known unto me the dream and the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill. But if ye show the dream and the interpretation thereof, ye shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honour: therefore show me the dream and the interpretation thereof.

Second Chaldean. Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation.

Nebuchadnezzar. I know of a certainty that ye

would gain time, because ye see the thing is gone from me. But if ye make not known unto me the dream, there is but one law for you : for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed : therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can show me the interpretation thereof.

First Chaldean. There is not a man upon earth that can show the king's matter : forasmuch as no king, lord, nor ruler, hath asked such a thing of any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean. And it is a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.

[The king rises in anger.]

Nebuchadnezzar. Away with them. Let all the wise men in Babylon be destroyed.

Daniel enters, and stands humbly before the king.

Daniel. Give me time, O king, and I will show thee the interpretation of thy dream.

[He falls on his knees, and prays. There is a short pause, amidst dead silence.]

Daniel. Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever : for wisdom and might are his : and he changeth the times and the seasons : he removeth kings, and setteth up kings : he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding : he revealeth the deep and secret things : he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me what we desired of thee : for thou hast made known unto us the king's matter.

Nebuchadnezzar. Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof ?

Daniel. The secret which the king hath demanded can neither wise men, astrologers, magicians, nor soothsayers, show unto the king ; but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and he hath made known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these : as for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter : and he that revealeth secrets hath made known to thee what shall come to pass. But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but to the intent that the interpretation may be made known to the king, and that thou mayest know the thoughts of thy heart. Thou, O king, sawest, and behold, a mighty image. This image, which was mighty, and whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee ; and the aspect thereof was terrible. As for this image, his head was of fine gold, his breast and arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron, and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors ; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them : and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

[Nebuchadnezzar starts up in astonishment.]

Daniel. This is the dream ; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art king of kings, unto whom the God of heaven hath given the kingdom, the power, and the strength, and the glory ; and wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee

to rule over them all : thou art the head of gold. And after thee shall rise another kingdom inferior to thee ; and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron : forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things : and as iron that crushes all these, shall it break in pieces and crush. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom ; but there shall be in it of the strength of iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men ; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron doth not mingle with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people : but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold ; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter : and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

Nebuchadnezzar. Of a truth your God is the God of gods, and the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou hast been able to reveal this secret. Thou shalt be ruler of the whole province of Babylon, and the chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon ; and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego shall be set over the affairs of the province of Babylon.

SCENE II. *The Fiery Furnace*

In the centre of the stage is a great image, before which are gathered all the great men of the land. Nebuchadnezzar is sitting on a throne on the left of the stage.

Reader. Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits : he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the satraps, the deputies, and the governors, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. Then the satraps, the deputies, and the governors, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. [*A herald stands out from the throng.*

Herald. To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up : and whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

The sound of a flute is heard behind the stage, and all prostrate themselves before the image. Two Chaldeans enter and stand before Nebuchadnezzar.

First Chaldean. O king, live for ever. Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, shall fall

down and worship the golden image : and whoso falleth not down and worshippingeth, shall be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. There are certain Jews whom thou hast appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego ; these men, O king, have not regarded thee : they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

Nebuchadnezzar. Bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego before my presence.

[Guards bring them in.]

Nebuchadnezzar. Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, that ye serve not my god, nor worship the golden image which I have set up ? Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made, well : but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace ; and who is that god that shall deliver you out of my hands ?

Shadrach. O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace ; and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

Nebuchadnezzar. Heat the furnace seven times hotter, and bind them and cast them in.

[The guards seize them, and bind them, and hurry them off the stage on the right.]

Reader. Then these men were bound in their hosen, their tunics, and their mantles, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

A soldier rushes in.

Soldier. O king, livè for ever.

Nebuchadnezzar. Are they cast into the fiery furnace ?

Soldier. They are, O king, and the furnace was so exceedingly hot that the fire slew those that cast them in. Yet did not the fire slay Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.

[Nebuchadnezzar can scarcely believe his ears. He descends from his throne and goes to see for himself, standing on the right and looking off. All the crowd press round him and gaze in wonder at the furnace.]

Nebuchadnezzar. Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire ?

Soldier. True, O king.

Nebuchadnezzar. Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt ; and the aspect of the fourth is like a son of the gods.

[He approaches nearer.]

Nebuchadnezzar. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, ye servants of the Most High God, come forth, and come hither.

They enter.

Reader. And the satraps, the deputies, and the governors, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, that the fire had no power upon their bodies, nor was the hair of their head singed, neither were their hosen changed, nor had the smell of fire passed on them.

Nebuchadnezzar. Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and have yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god except their own God. Therefore I make a decree, that every

people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill : because there is no other god that is able to deliver after this sort.

Reader. Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego in the province of Babylon.

SCENE III. *The Second Dream of Nebuchadnezzar*

Nebuchadnezzar is sitting as in Scene I., surrounded by his courtiers.

Nebuchadnezzar. I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace. I saw a dream which made me afraid ; and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me. Bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they may make known unto me the interpretation of the dream.

The magicians enter.

Nebuchadnezzar. Behold, I dreamed a dream, and thus were the visions of my head upon my bed : I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth. The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all : the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the branches thereof, and all flesh was fed of it. I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven. He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his

fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches. Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth: let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him. The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the lowest of men. This dream I king Nebuchadnezzar have seen. Now therefore interpret the dream.

The magicians stand dumb. Daniel enters.

Nebuchadnezzar. O Belteshazzar, master of magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof. Thus were the visions of my head upon my bed: I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth. The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the branches thereof, and all flesh was fed of it. I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven. He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches. Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass

of the field ; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth : let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him ; and let seven times pass over him. The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones : to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the lowest of men. This dream I king Nebuchadnezzar have seen : and thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation, forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation ; but thou art able, for the spirit of the holy gods is in thee. [*Daniel does not reply.*] Belteshazzar, let not the dream, or the interpretation, trouble thee.

Daniel. My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine adversaries. The tree that thou sawest, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth ; whose leaves were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all ; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of heaven had their habitation : it is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong : for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth. And whereas the king saw a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew down the tree, and destroy it ; nevertheless leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field ; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him ; this is the interpretation, O king, and it is the decree of the Most High, which is come upon my lord the king : that thou shalt be driven from men, and thy dwelling shall

be with the beasts of the field, and thou shalt be made to eat grass as oxen, and shalt be wet with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee ; till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots ; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule. Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor ; if there may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity. [*All go out.*]

Twelve months elapse. Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel enter, talking together.

Nebuchadnezzar. Is not this great Babylon, which I have built for the royal dwelling-place, by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty ? While the word was in my mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken : the kingdom is departed from thee. And thou shalt be driven from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field ; thou shalt be made to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee ; until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon me : and I was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and my body was wet with the dew of heaven, till my hair was grown like eagles' feathers, and my nails like birds' claws. And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever ; for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom from generation to generation : and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing : and he doeth according to his will in the army of

heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth : and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou ? At the same time mine understanding returned unto me ; and for the glory of my kingdom, my majesty and brightness returned unto me ; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me ; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent greatness was added unto me. Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven ; for all his works are truth, and his ways judgment : and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

SCENE IV. *The Writing on the Wall*

The scene is the banqueting-room of the king's palace. Belshazzar, with his officers and wives, is feasting. There is talking and laughter.

Belshazzar. Bring the golden and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar my father took out of the temple which was in Jerusalem.

Slaves enter with the sacred vessels, and the feasters drink out of them.

Reader. In the same hour came forth the fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace : and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.

[*A sudden silence descends upon the feast. Belshazzar trembles, pushes aside his chair, and stares in terror at the wall on the left of the stage. All look in the same direction.*

Belshazzar. Bring in the astronomers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. [*A servant goes out.*

The magicians enter, and bow before the king.

Belshazzar. Whoever shall read this writing, and

show me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.

First Magician. Nay, we cannot read this writing, O king.

Queen. O king, live for ever : let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed : there is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods ; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him : and the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made him master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers ; forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and showing of dark sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now let Daniel be called and he will show the interpretation.

Belshazzar. Call this Daniel before me.

A servant goes out, and ushers Daniel into the king's presence.

Belshazzar. Art thou that Daniel, which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Judah ? I have heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee. And now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof : but they could not show the interpretation of the thing. But I have heard of thee, that thou canst give interpretations, and dissolve doubts : now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Daniel. Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; nevertheless, I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation. O thou king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father the kingdom, and greatness, and glory, and majesty: and because of the greatness that he gave him, all the peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he raised up, and whom he would he put down. But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened that he dealt proudly, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: and he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses; he was fed with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven: until he knew that the Most High God ruleth in the kingdom of men, and that he setteth up over it whomsoever he will. *[Belshazzar fidgets impatiently.]*

Belshazzar. True, true, O Daniel, but what of the writing?

Daniel. Patience, O king. Thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou and thy lords, and thy wives, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified: then was the part of the hand sent from before him, and this writing was inscribed. And this is the writing that was inscribed, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and brought it to an end. TEKEL; thou art weighed in the balances, and art

found wanting. PERES ; thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

Belshazzar. Clothe him in purple, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and make a proclamation concerning him, that he shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Reader. In that night the Chaldean king was slain. And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.

SCENE V. *The Den of Lions*

The princes are gathered together before the throne of king Darius. They whisper together in undertones.

Reader. It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty satraps, which should be throughout the whole kingdom ; and over them three presidents, of whom Daniel was one ; that these satraps might give account unto them, and that the king should have no damage. Then this Daniel was distinguished above the presidents and the satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him ; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm. Then the presidents and the satraps sought to find occasion against Daniel as touching the kingdom ; but they could find none occasion nor fault ; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him.

First President. We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God. [*They turn to Darius.*]

First President. King Darius, live for ever. All the presidents of the kingdom, the deputies and the satraps, the counsellors and the governors, have con-

sulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

Darius. Bring me the decree and I will sign it.

[*He signs it.*]

Reader. And when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; (now his windows were open in his chamber toward Jerusalem;) and he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

A messenger enters and whispers to the princes.

Second President. Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall make petition unto any god or man within thirty days, save unto thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?

Darius. The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

Second President. That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day. Know, O king, that it is the law of the Medes and Persians, that no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.

Reader. Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to rescue him.

Darius. Bring Daniel before me.

[*Daniel is brought in.*]

Darius. Cast him into the den of lions. Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.

[*Daniel is taken out and cast into the den of lions.*]

Reader. And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den ; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords ; that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting : neither were instruments of music brought before him : and his sleep fled from him. Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions. [*The king goes to the left of the stage.*

Darius. Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions ?

[*Daniel's voice is heard outside.*

Daniel. O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, and they have not hurt me : forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me ; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

The king claps his hands. A slave enters.

Darius. Take Daniel up out of the lions' den.

Daniel enters. Darius goes gladly to meet him and embraces him.

Reader. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he had trusted in his God.

Darius. Bring those men which have accused Daniel, and cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives.

Reader. And the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces, or ever they came at the bottom of the den.

Darius. Write unto all the peoples, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth ; Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, that in all the dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel : for he is the living God, and sted-

fast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end : he delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth ; who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.

Reader. So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

THE END

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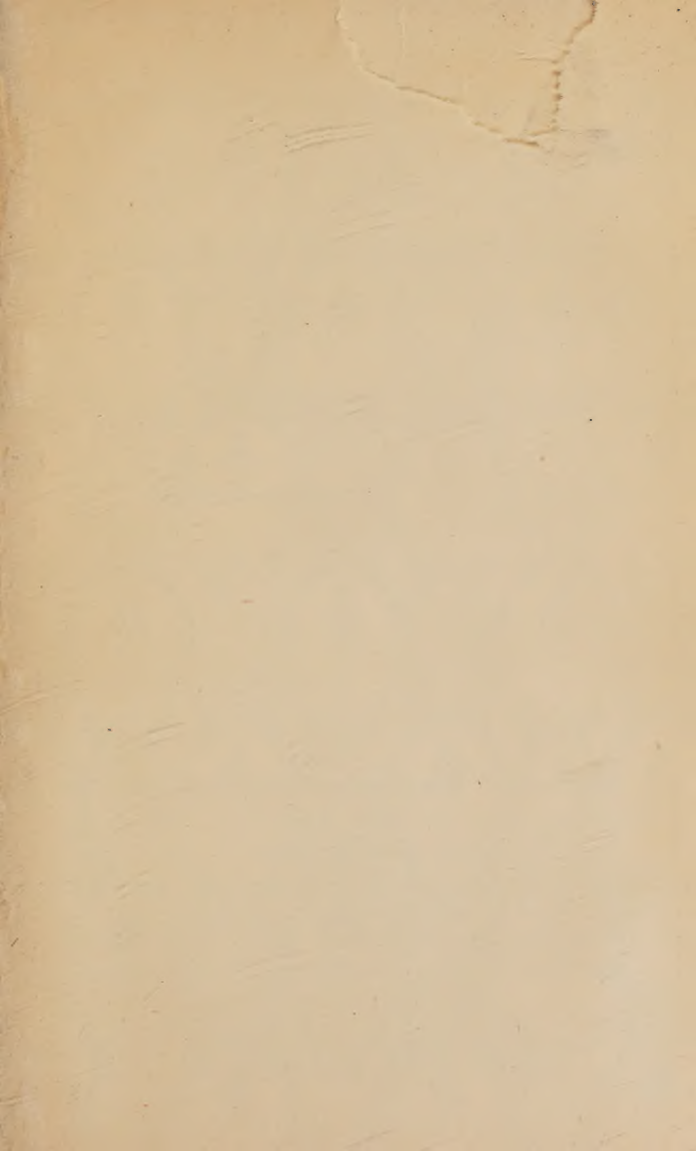
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